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THE MILITARY SOLUTION

CAN JUNIOR CADETS SAVE TROUBLED KIDS?

BY SARAH STUTEVILLE
PHOTOS BY ALEX STONEHILL

It is Saturday morning on Myrtle Avenue, a busy artery that runs through the center of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. At 9 a.m. the pizza joints and delis are just beginning to see their first customers of the day, and the metal gate of the barbershop is rattling open. Out in front of a modest brick building with a placard that reads, "United Church of God, Founded 1928," a timid group of a dozen kids in full army fatigues scuff the toes of their recently shined black boots against the broken pavement, short-billed army caps – or "covers" – crumpled in their hands.

By 9:30 their adolescent awkwardness has been suspended. The group has grown to almost 40 as "formation exercises" begin in the overheated basement of the St. Stephens church. "On your face!" screams a sergeant who doesn't appear much older than the kids in front of him, as the roomful of boys and girls aged 5 to 18 scrambles into push-up position. The wall is lined with mothers in folding chairs, toddlers perched on their laps. A few potential recruits in sports jerseys and jeans eye the exercise drill warily from a corner. Their mothers are in an orientation meeting upstairs with the program leader, Maj. Tony Williams.

"I want y'all to scream when you're doing push-ups! Those better not be knees I see on the floor! Scream, I said!" The sergeant weaves between the neatly lined bodies, "One sergeant, two sergeant, three sergeant," grunt the cadets as a second round of push-ups begins.

The Junior Cadets, founded three years ago by the Rev. Craig Williams of St. Stephens, are in part inspired by the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs, which have been gaining popularity due to their claim that they instill discipline and structure into the lives of young people, particularly in poor and minority neighborhoods. Unlike the JROTC, the Junior Cadets are not funded by the military. Instead, the program is paid for by the church, \$5 monthly dues from every cadet and out of the pockets of the training staff.

Maj. Tony Williams, who was raised in Brooklyn, entered the army at 17 and served in Vietnam, runs the program. He believes that discipline is the way to reach young people growing up in a poor neighborhood such as Bed-Stuy. "We saw the young kids getting lost," he explains. "We have a lot of single parents and they can't spend the time with the

kids that they need to. They have to work two jobs, this kid has to pick up that kid, and when the older kid gets home he or she's got to do the cooking, so the kids get lost in the sauce here, so to speak. I have had this program for three years and it's working. The discipline, the structure is what they needed."

By 10:30 the education drill has begun. "Are you ready to learn something?" a female teenage lieutenant hollers. Every right fist in the basement raises in what almost resembles a Black Panther salute. "If you are ready to learn, sit on your butt right now!" The room crouches and the sergeant marches towards the front of the room. "Where was the Marine Corps founded, cadets?" he bellows down to a room of expectant faces.

Eyvyne, one of the mothers watching the education drill, points to a tall boy of about 14, slumping in a uniform whose sleeves have already grown too short for his lanky arms. "That's Glenn," she says, laughing a little. "He's the tallest one here." She put Glenn in the Junior Cadets a year and a half ago because he was "getting out of hand." She says she heard about the program from a friend. "He's better now, but he's still got a ways to go," she explains, smiling ruefully.

Many of the mothers present express similar stories, of spending late nights wondering how they were going to control their teenage children, and getting recommendations from friends or neighbors that they try the Junior Cadets. The program at St. Stephens has grown to include as many as 150 kids, some of whom travel from Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan to be there from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. every Saturday.

"This was my last resort before I sent him back to relatives in the Dominican Republic to go to military school," says one mother. "Actually it's a great satisfaction to know he's suffering after stealing \$600 from his mother," she adds with an embarrassed laugh.

Though these mothers are enthusiastic about the program and come to see their sons and daughters exercising in army fatigues, learning military call-and-response chants, and marching with out-of-commission rifles, they say they wouldn't encourage their children to join the military.

"I didn't want him just standing on the corners, you know, like you see these young kids doing. I wanted him to have something to do," says a woman who has two boys in the program. When asked how she would feel if they decided to enter the service, she responds, "It would be their decision, but I wouldn't want it. I mean, I see a difference

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With autonomous chapters in more than 100 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to illuminate and analyze issues impacting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for The Independent, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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NEW YORKERS SAY 'I DO' TO SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

BY NEELA GHOSHAL

Bitter rain didn't deter hundreds of New Yorkers from staging a rally in support of same-sex marriage outside the Manhattan Municipal Building on March 4.

An estimated 100 same-sex couples lined up at 8 a.m. outside the building to demand marriage licenses while at least 500 supporters rallied across the street, holding signs proclaiming "I DO New York." Polite denial letters were handed out by the city clerk's office, stating that state law does not authorize granting licenses to same-sex partners. But for the LGBT community, the fight for marriage equality is just beginning.

"As far as I'm concerned, this is very much a civil rights issue," said Nell Cahill, 29, who held a hand-made sign under her umbrella reading "Single Irish Catholic Seeks Gay Marriage." Before this month, Cahill hadn't been actively involved with the gay marriage battle. "But once things started seeming possible," she said, "it took on a much greater emotional impact."

Andrew Miller, a former ACT UP organizer, coordinated the event in hopes of bringing New York to the forefront of the struggle for same-sex marriage and to "[prod] our mayor into behaving more like San Francisco's Gavin

Newsom or Chicago's Richard Daley — and less like a coward." Miller organized a meeting at the LGBT Community Center, and out of this, New York Marriage Now was born.

New Yorkers were also inspired by recent events in the town of New Paltz, where Green Party Mayor Jason West married 25 same-sex couples in February. West was halted by an injunction from State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, but Unitarian ministers married 37 more couples in the first half of March. Now, both West and Reverends Kay Greeleaf and Dawn Sangrey face criminal charges.

West, who is challenging the order in court, states, "I intend for the injunction to be lifted, and I intend to go back to solemnizing these marriages."

Conservative lawmakers argue that same-sex marriage would threaten traditional family values, jeopardizing the very institution of marriage. In New York, some bystanders seemed unperturbed by this notion.

"It's equal rights. If you like another man, what's wrong? The city should make it legal," argued Harry, a newspaper vendor outside City Hall.

Alberto Dulanto of the Bronx, disagreed, saying that gay marriage would disrupt legal and religious traditions. "I respect their lifestyle, but they shouldn't change the laws,"

THE LOVE PARADE: New Yorkers rally downtown on March 4 to demand equal marriage rights.

PHOTO: ALLEY ERNST

said Dulanto. He was at the municipal building seeking a copy of his own marriage license, in order to apply for a visa to bring his Peruvian mother-in-law to New York.

Ironically, Dulanto's situation sheds light on one of many ways in which current marriage laws discriminate against gays and lesbians. Immigration laws, designed to promote "family unification," do not treat same-sex partners as families.

Other rights denied to same-sex partners include the ability to claim Social Security benefits and the right to inherit property if a partner dies without a will.

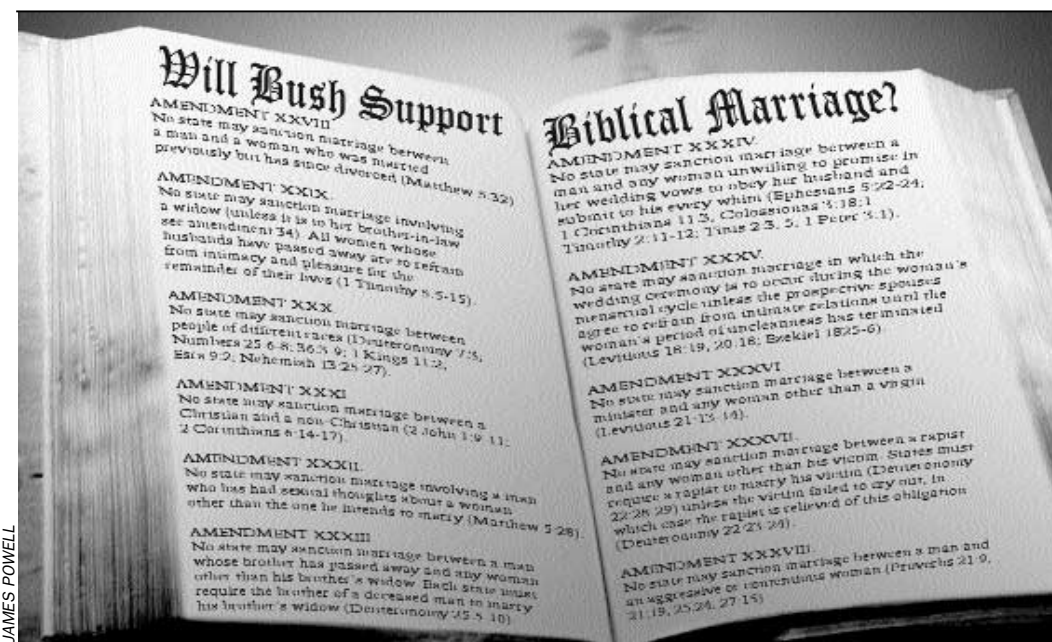
The LGBT community is far from having a unified position on marriage, but consensus is building rapidly for demanding marriage rights for those who want them. Bob Kohler, 77, says that he would not choose to marry. "I don't care about marriage at my age, and I don't believe in the religious aspect of it. But through the right to marriage, it's as if we become a whole person — and right now we're not."

Advocates for marriage equality dismiss arguments that Republicans may seize upon gay marriage as a wedge issue in the November elections.

"That's an offensive argument," says Mayor West. "Every time there's a civil rights movement, people who are not directly affected try to make other people wait for their rights. I married people who've been together 30 years, I married a survivor of the World Trade Center attacks who was pulled out five minutes before the tower collapsed. If any of these people were on their deathbed, their partner would not be able to visit them. It's a life and death issue."

"This is definitely not going away," says Connie Ress of Marriage Equality, an organization dedicated to ending marriage discrimination. Ongoing events are planned throughout the city. At least 16 couples demanded licenses at the marriage bureau from March 8 to 12. Dozens of clergy members have promised to issue licenses to gay couples as a form of civil disobedience. Numerous groups, including Empire State Pride Agenda, are challenging Bush's proposed constitutional amendment.

Says Kohler, "It's an issue whose time has come." Winking, he paraphrases someone who is anything but a spokesperson for the LGBT community: "In gay and lesbian rights, we've come to a time when if you are not for me, you're against me."



PEDRO PIETRI ••• 1944 – 2004

NUYORICAN OBITUARY

Pedro's poetry reminded many that the love of your people was more important than the love of fame or money.

*"do not dream
if you want your dreams to come true
if you want
to feel very rich
look at your hands
that is where
the definition of magic is located at"*

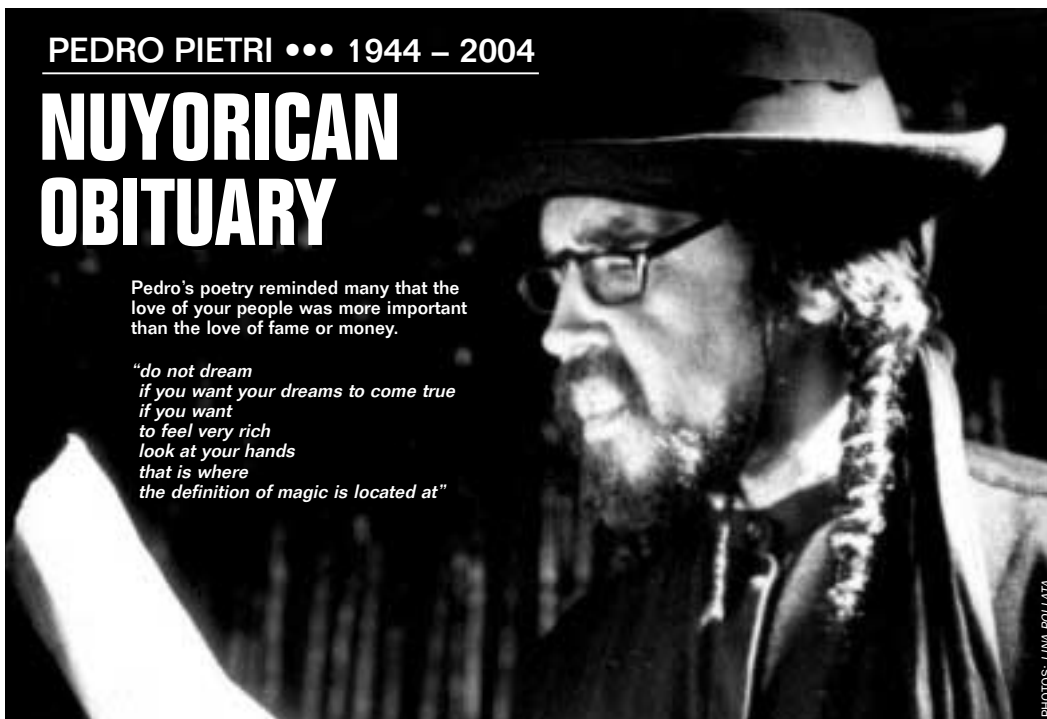


PHOTO: LINA POLATKA

"So, I come out of recovery, and this jerk came into my room with crushed pieces of paper, and one of those crushed pieces of paper was my medical record. They told me, 'What you have is incurable.' I told them, 'What you have is incurable.' They were making it real hopeless, you know? And that isn't the approach. It's by being positive. That can heal. They made it like life was over, so, I called Papoleta [fellow friend and street poet] to the Intensive Care Unit, because I refused to stay there. Papo came with the suitcases and everything. I don't know how much time they gave me to live, but I gave them the same time to live also. At least that way, I can rest in peace. That was the beginning of the end, and the saddest time in my life."

— from an interview with Raymond L. Bertrand, Feb. 8

BY LENINA NADAL

Travelling from Tijuana, Mexico, back to his home in Nuyorico (Puerto Rican New York), the legendary poet Pedro Pietri died March 3 after battling a cancer of the stomach. From "bullet-proof rice and beans" to train stops, his poetry and plays articulated the struggles, joy and humor of Puerto Ricans raised in New York City's barrios. Bohemian, downtown, street cosmopolitan — Pietri lived free even if the world has yet to catch up.

Pietri was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, on March 21, 1944. At the age of three, his family moved to Harlem. He attended public schools in New York City and was drafted to serve in the Vietnam War from 1965-67. He returned and joined the anti-war movement. Pietri was one of many soldiers affected by the herbicide termed Agent Orange that led to the slow deterioration of his health. An estimated 19 million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed over Vietnam during the war.

"Pedro Pietri gave voice to feelings long in the air, in a way that no one else dared, or could, express. Such a powerful mix of love, commitment, creativity, wit, lack of self-consciousness and irreverence is so rare and absolutely necessary," said Raquel Rivera, professor and author of *Puerto Ricans From the Hip Hop Zone*.

Pietri was a Puerto Rican Socrates, ghetto fabulous without the bling. Dressed in all black since his return from Vietnam, he wandered in and out living room events, poetry cafes and countries asking questions and offering wisdom. He dressed in what seemed like the same clothes and wore his hair long and

frizzy under a variety of matching hats. He carried a worn suitcase adorned with bumper stickers selling everything from condoms to dreams. He loved new, young poets enamored by the spoken word tradition and if you gave him your name and phone number on a napkin, he didn't lose it.

Pedro decorated himself with dazzling monikers. He was *El Reverendo de la Iglesia de Tomates* (Reverend of the Church of Tomatoes), ambassador to the Puerto Rican Embassy (which exists only metaphorically, of course), Young Lord's Poet Laureate and the Spanglish Metaphor Consultant of the Latin Insomniacs Motorcycle Club Without motorcycles.

"The beauty about Pedro's legacy for us Nuyoricans is that he took away the anguish of the Spanglish Language, he helped us reclaim something first considered negative and flip it into an absolute phenomenon," said La Bruja, a Bronx-based poet and performance artist.

Nuyorican was used by Puerto Ricans on the island to ridicule Puerto Ricans who grew up in New York City. Pietri affirmed the term Nuyorican by simply saying that it was a new identity; a person who blended the culture of Puerto Rico with New York attitude and style, often interlaced with influences from Black culture and the Latino diaspora.

This identity was the inspiration for the Nuyorican Poet's Cafe, of which Pedro Pietri was a founder. A nationally renowned center for the cultivation of the oral traditions of story-telling, poetry slammings, politically charged art, the Nuyorican embraced almost any new poetic or musical traditions you might imagine or invent.

"At the age of eighteen, I heard Pedro read



Street memorial for the Reverend on the Lower East Side.

his *Puerto Rican Obituary*. I knew then this man was celebrating the lives of the people I had been raised with, in the midst of Sunset Park, Brooklyn. He was celebrating my life as well. I think of that power in his work often, the local made global," reflected Suheir Hammad, a Palestinian-American poet who came up in New York's spoken word scene.

Pietri, like his poetry, blended surrealism, history, radical politics and a hearty sense of humor. His words shocked and inspired generations of poets from the founders of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe, to the mid-nineties hip hop bomba youth group, the Welfare Poets. As a member of the political organization the Young Lords Party, his ties to community activism was always consistent.

His poetry reminded Puerto Ricans of our roots, our parents, and grandparents, struggle for a liberated homeland, and the perpetual anxiety of waiting for store-bought American dreams to come true.

With his hands, negrito love and a bit of magic, Pietri brought heaven down to Earth.

Pedro's publications include *Illusions of a Revolving Door: Plays* (1992), *The Masses are Asses* (1984), *Traffic Violations* (1983), *Lost in the Museum of Natural History* (1980), *Invisible Poetry* (1979), and *Puerto Rican Obituary* (1973). His work has also been included in several anthologies throughout the years and his words have been heard live in hundreds poetry readings throughout the world.

reporter's NOTEBOOK

REVOLT OF THE RUBBER STAMPS

What a night. Mayor Michael Bloomberg could only get five out of 13 members of his Panel for Educational Policy to rubber stamp his plan to impose high stakes testing on the city's third graders. So he fired three members hours before a decisive March 15 vote on his policy. Their replacements could have been plucked out of a phone book for all the mayor cared.

Interestingly enough, all three of the fired — Helen McKeever Thomas, Ramona Hernandez and Susana Leval — are women as well as the five remaining dissidents who voted against the Mayor.

"This is a joke. This is a pachanga!" Councilwoman Margarita Lopez cried out at the beginning of more than three hours of heated public comments in an East Side high school auditorium.

You can almost hear third grade classes around the city grinding to a halt as nervous principals and teachers begin cramming their students for this spring's one-size-fits all exams. "My daughter has been coming home from school every day with headaches since February and she doesn't normally get headaches," said Martia Gordon, mother of a third grader at PS 176 in Inwood.

Millions of dollars are being plowed into the tests while class size is going up for the first time in eight years. Decades of studies have shown that holding back students leads to higher dropout rates. Nonetheless, 15,000 third graders are expected to be held back — just in time to keep them from taking next year's federally-mandated fourth grade tests when the mayor is up for re-election.

—John Tarleton

CITY IN BRIEF

RUSSIAN GOV'T PRESSURES NY RADIO STATION

A New York Russian-language radio station was pressured by the Russian Embassy not to advertise a meeting with President Vladimir Putin's opponents at a high school near Brighton Beach, according to the *Russian Forward*. New Life, the radio station, was also told by Aeroflot, the Russian Airline, that they would pull their ads if the station advertised the meeting. The meeting, which included two former KGB agents who are critical of Putin's policies, was scheduled to take place on the day Putin won the Russian election by a landslide.

WTC CLEANUP LAWSUIT ALLEGES EPA LYING

One hundred and thirty New York City workers and residents filed a class-action lawsuit March 11 against the Environmental Protection Agency for lying to the public about the health effects of the World Trade Center collapse and for failing to adequately clean-up local buildings. The class-action suit accuses then-EPA head Christine Todd Whitman of "a shockingly deliberate indifference to human health." The EPA did not begin the clean up until May of 2002. Since then, 3,425 out of 15,000 residential units in Lower Manhattan have been professionally cleaned under the scope of the EPA. For the eight months following the collapse of the World Trade Center, the EPA directed people to the New York City's Department of Health, which instructed people to wipe the dust off their windows and floors with a wet rag.

COLONIZING HARLEM, ANTAGONIZING STUDENTS OF COLOR COLUMBIA'S DIVIDING LINE

By CATRIONA STUART

During three days of protest against highly public incidents of racism at the Ivy-league institution in February, David Johns sat outside the steps of Columbia University's Low Memorial Library wearing a sign around his neck that read, "I am silent because I am tired."

"I am tired of making explanations that would be obvious on a campus that took its 'diversity' rhetoric seriously," he explained.

Johns was one of a number of students from the Columbia University Concerned Students of Color who, along with activists and community members, participated in a speak out at St. Mary's Church of Harlem on a proposed plan by Columbia to expand into the low-income neighborhood.

"The treatment of students of color at Columbia University parallels with [Columbia's treatment of] Harlem," said Nellie Bailey, director of the Harlem Tenant's Council as she recalled the 1968 student protests sparked by Columbia's proposal to build a city-subsidized segregated gymnasium on public parkland.

"The predominant message to students of color and to people of color in general is that we don't want you here. Our message to Columbia is, we don't care if you don't want us, we are here to stay," said Bailey.

In mid-February, thousands of Columbia undergraduates opened their mailboxes to find a copy of the campus newspaper *The Fed*. The satirical publication, funded by student activity fees, contained a cartoon that touted blacks as being "invented in the late 1700s as a form of cheap labor."

The cartoon arrived on the heels of a bake sale mocking affirmative action. Sponsored

by the Conservative Club, the sale charged Jewish, Asian and white males more for baked goods than other minorities or women. The bake sale, a tactic being repeated nationwide by right-wing student groups, was timed to coincide with a job recruitment conference for minority students.

In response, one student publicly advocated that another sale be held where children of alumni and those who could

offerings, but emphasized that systemic change would come slowly.

Nell Geiser, a Columbia College sophomore, described his response as "the same rhetoric without the teeth or the policy-making power we had asked for."

Student groups are still in negotiations with Bollinger.

But according to Geiser, a member of the expansion plan's student advisory committee,

>> Harlem residents are not opposed to development in their community, but they remain wary of Columbia's empty promises and its expansion plans.

afford SAT tutors pay less, and those with a building bearing their family name get their sweet treats for free.

And earlier this year the Columbia campus was littered with flyers depicting Michael Jackson accompanied by the caption, "Who needs ethnic studies?"

Student groups protested these incidents and sent a nine-point memorandum to university President Lee Bollinger advocating measures ranging from the creation of a committee on diversity with "policy-making power in implementing protocol for handling bias-related incidents," to the creation of three new top-level positions to handle multicultural affairs.

Bollinger, who publicly supports affirmative action despite two high-profile admissions lawsuits during his stint as president at the University of Michigan, endorsed the creation of a Multicultural Affairs Office. He also called for further diversification of faculty and course

the university continues to forge ahead with its original goals and is not taking the committee's concerns seriously.

Amid fears of massive gentrification, loss of jobs and secondary displacement, local organizations like the Harlem Tenants' Council and the Coalition to Preserve Community have been organizing feverishly in response to Columbia's plans to construct a new 20-acre campus in West Harlem between 125th and 133rd streets.

Lying in the shadow of the elevated 1/9 train line, the sooty, run-down tract of warehouses, parking garages, and auto-parts stores is currently an industrial zone. It houses only 140 legal residential units and businesses employing 1,150 persons, according to university figures. As one of Manhattan's poorest and least populated neighborhoods, West Harlem is highly desirable to real-estate developers.

An economic impact study conducted by

Applesseed, a consulting firm, estimated that full development of the site would generate \$1 billion annually for the city and state economies, and create nearly 9,000 new jobs.

Hugh O'Neill, president and founder of Applesseed, holds a Ph.D. from Columbia.

While Harlem residents are not opposed to development and growth in their community, they remain wary of empty promises and the price they may pay for Columbia's plans.

Bailey charges the university is already trying to make the area less livable for current residents. She believes the recent decision to cut 10 percent of the medical staff at Harlem Hospital, which Columbia manages in conjunction with New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, is intended to pave the way for the expansion.

In an area where Columbia is already the largest employer, almost 50 percent of African-American men in Harlem are unemployed. Given its history, Tom DeMott of the Coalition to Preserve Community expressed little hope that expansion will spell much opportunity for Harlem residents.

Speaking at the latest forum, Neil Smith, former Columbia professor and director of the City University of New York's Center for Place, Culture and Politics, reminded the group that the university has not only an important history, but also a geography.

A stroll through the lush greenery of Columbia's campus and a quick survey of the students hurrying off to class puts a face on the university's stance on race. In the midst of Harlem, and at the beginning of the 21st Century, Columbia's undergraduate student population still boasts only 7 percent African-American and Latino enrollment.

BUSH PROPOSES BILLION DOLLAR CUT TO HOUSING VOUCHERS DESPITE YEARS OF AUSTERITY:

250,000 EVICTIONS?

By STEVEN WISHNIA

The Bush Administration's proposed budget could cut a quarter-million families out of the federal Section 8 subsidized-housing program, low-income housing advocates warn.

Bush's fiscal 2005 budget, released Feb. 2, would reduce funding for the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program to \$11.8 billion — \$1.1 billion below this year's spending, and \$1.6 billion below the amount needed to avoid cutting people out of the program.

The proposed cuts would eliminate aid for 250,000 of the slightly more than 2 million households in the program, according to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC).

The voucher program, established in 1974, is the largest federal low-income housing program. It subsidizes low-income, elderly, and disabled tenants by giving them vouchers to cover the difference between 30 percent of their income and what the federal government considers a "fair market rent" for privately owned housing in the area. Originally called Section 8, it was renamed the Housing Choice Voucher Program in 1998, but is still commonly known as Section 8.

Slightly more than half of voucher holders are families with children, while 40 percent are seniors or people with disabilities, according to the Washington-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP). About 40 percent have jobs.

New York City, which now has about

100,000 families receiving vouchers, would lose 5,000 vouchers because of the cuts, a Housing Authority official told City Limits. Victor Bach, senior housing policy analyst at the Community Service Society, says the city would lose 7,000 vouchers, and the CBPP estimates that the Bush proposal would cut off 24,000 of the 200,000 households now receiving vouchers in New York State.

Buried in a 1,000-page computer printout released after the official budget proposal are plans for even deeper cuts. The Bush administration intends to chop \$6 billion off the program in fiscal 2009. That would eliminate vouchers for 800,000 families, including almost 80,000 in New York State — about 40 percent of those in the program, according to the CBPP.

The only alternative local authorities would have to cutting off vouchers would be to raise all rents by up to \$250 a month. "This would be the most severe cut in a low-income program since the early years of the Reagan administration," CBPP executive director Robert Greenstein said in a statement Feb. 12.

The Bush proposal also does not include any protection for people who lose their vouchers. "That's one of the biggest problems with it," says Kim Schaffer of NLIHC.

Demand for the vouchers far exceeds supply. New York City has 154,000 people on its waiting list, which was closed in 1994. As more than 90 percent of the vouchers that become available go to emergency cases — the homeless, victims of domestic violence, intimidated witnesses to crimes — the list has

barely shrunk since then, says Bach. In many large cities, including New York, the wait for a voucher for those on the list is eight to 10 years.

Spending on the program increased significantly from 1996 to 2003. Part of this, according to the CBPP, arose from increased housing costs; about half arose from increases in the number of vouchers issued, as Congress attempted to deal with the long waiting lists and provide a market-based alternative as it cut aid to public housing. (The total number of people in federally subsidized housing remained the same, the CBPP says.)

The Bush proposal also includes a number of other changes intended to cut costs and encourage — or force — people to leave publicly subsidized housing, in the name of "self-sufficiency." It would replace fixed per-unit housing payments, which go up automatically when rents rise, with block grants to local housing authorities, which are set by Congress. It would let housing authorities charge tenants more than 30 percent of their income for rent, ending a longstanding limit.

And instead of requiring that three-fourths of vouchers go to extremely poor families — those making less than 30 percent of area median income (about \$19,000 a year in New York City) — it would allow local authorities give them to anyone making up to 80 percent of the median, and conceivably more in some cases, according to the NLIHC.

This, says the CBPP, would enable the local authorities to save money by shifting housing assistance from the extremely poor to

slightly better-off families, who could get by on smaller subsidies. HUD acknowledges this, calling it an "efficiency" improvement.

The Bush plan would also limit "enhanced vouchers," which are given to tenants in tight housing markets, to one year. These vouchers pay extra to cover tenants when their landlord leaves the program and charges the full market rent. "Where are these tenants to go?" asks Bach.

Some public-housing officials have praised the proposals for allowing them more flexibility, but tenant advocates are appalled. "Outrage is the only rational response," NLIHC president Sheila Crowley said in a statement.

The catch may be that the Bush plan would give local governments more choices about how to run housing programs and fewer resources to keep them going. "If the Administration's proposal is enacted, housing agencies would likely be compelled to cut their voucher programs much more sharply in years after 2005," the CBPP noted in a report Feb. 24. "Historically, funding for many block grants that assist low-income people has failed to keep pace with need and has fallen well behind inflation over time."

Bach sees the changes as part of Bush's "long-term, very patient strategy of shrinking domestic programs."

As block grants, unlike the vouchers, are not indexed to cover rising housing costs, he explains, the city will be able to aid fewer people, especially the homeless. "What all this is going to do is impose higher costs on the city," he adds, "because if the city doesn't have vouchers to help families out of the shelters, people will be staying in shelters longer, and it will have to expand the system."

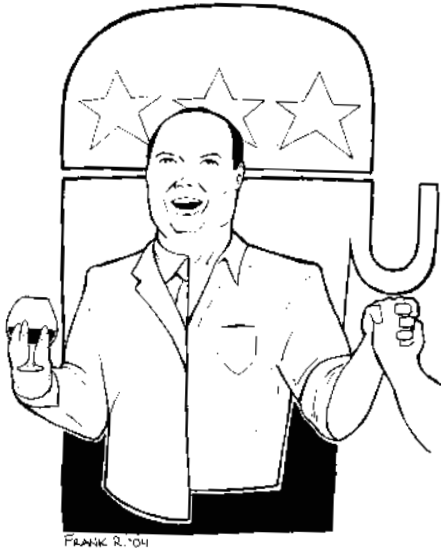
Bush's budget would also hold funds for public housing and homeless assistance at last year's levels. It would cut money for lead-paint hazard reduction by 15 percent, to \$139 million.

NATION IN BRIEF

BY TOM FRANK

There was a commercial that aired on Iowa television in which Howard Dean, was blasted for being the choice of the cultural elites: a "tax hiking, government-expanding, latte-drinking, sushi-eating, Volvo-driving, New York Times-reading, body-piercing, Hollywood-loving, left-wing freak show" who had no business trying to talk to the plain folk of Iowa.

The commercial was sponsored by the Club for Growth, a Washington-based organization made up of anti-government economists, prominent men of means and big thinkers of the late New Economy. In other words, the people who thought they saw Jesus in the ever-ascending Nasdaq, the pundits



for the right? Partly because liberals refuse to take backlash populism seriously. They simply don't bother to answer the stereotype of themselves as a tasteful elite, seeing it as a treacherous and obvious deceit mounted by the puppet-masters of the right. A smaller coterie of liberals don't bother with it because they believe that conservative populism is merely camouflage for racism, which they believe to be epidemic in the U.S. The problem, they think, is neo-Nazis or right-wing militia types like Timothy McVeigh. That's the real expression of middle America, the thing we ought to be investigating.

I encountered a spectacular version of this pathology at a leftist gathering in Chicago. After listening to a devastatingly accurate critique of the

A WAR AGAINST ELITES THE AMERICA THAT WILL VOTE FOR BUSH

who worked themselves into a lather singing the praises of new billionaires, the economists who made a living by insisting that privatization and deregulation were the mandates of history itself, are now running television commercials denouncing the "elite".

That's the mystery of the United States, circa 2004. Thanks to the rightward political shift of the past 30 years, wealth is today concentrated in fewer hands than it has been since the 1920s; workers have less power over the conditions under which they toil than ever before in our lifetimes; and the corporation has become the most powerful actor in our world. Yet that rightward shift - still going strong to this day - sells itself as a righteous uprising of the little guy against an obnoxious upper class.

At the top of it all sits President George W. Bush, a former Texas oilman, a Yale graduate, the son of a former president and a grandson of a U.S. senator - the beneficiary of every advantage that upper America is capable of showering on its sons - and a man who also declares that he has a populist streak because of all the disdain showered upon him and his Texas cronies by the high-hats of the East. His resentment of the East-coast snobs is objectively ridiculous, but it is honestly felt. Bush shows every sign of being able to carry a substantial part of the white working-class vote this November, just as he did four years ago.

There was a time, of course, when populism was the native tongue of the American left, when working-class people could be counted on to vote in favor of stronger labor unions, a regulated economy and various schemes for universal economic security. Back then the Republicans, who opposed all these things, were clearly identified as the party of corporate management, the spokesmen for society's elite.

Rightwing populism takes two general forms. What we saw the most of during the 1990s was the populism of the market, which has its origins in the PR strategies of Wall Street. Here the basic idea is that the free market is in essence a democracy. Since we all participate in markets - buying stock, choosing between brands of shaving cream, going to movie X instead of movie Y - markets are an expression of the vox populi.

When times are good, this idea expresses itself in lurid evocations of the common man at one with his corporations. Television viewers in the 1990s saw constant mini-dramas of the stock market as a maker of revolution; of little old ladies swapping investment tips; of bosses

becoming one with the ancient rhythms of acquisitiveness; of little kids realizing their true selves through products; and of ordinary people basking in the glow of all the fine new millionaires their investments were producing. Even Enron got into the act, comparing its campaign for electricity deregulation to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

But market populism doesn't play too well in hard times. It slowly retreats to the wings and yields center-stage to the old, reliable populism of the backlash, the collection of gripes that faults leftists for the cultural monstrosities they have imposed on the good people of middle America: they have legalized abortion, stamped out prayer in the public schools and are now threatening to sanction gay marriage. Again the enemy of the common people is the liberal elite, and again they are identified as a class of intellectuals whose trademark sin is hubris, thinking they know better than everyone else.

This populism, ever present on the radio and on Fox News, is obsessed with the symbolism of the consumer culture. Instead of rebuking the powerful directly, it vituperates against the snobbish and delicate things that the powerful are believed to enjoy: special kinds of coffee, high-end restaurants, Ivy League educations, vacations in Europe, and always, always, imported cars.

Against these maddeningly sissified tastes, backlash populism posits a true-blue heartland where real Americans eat red meat in big slabs, know all about farming, drink Budweiser, work hard with their hands and drive domestic cars.

The all-Americans despise the affected elites, with their highfalutin ways and that's why they vote for plainspoken men like George Bush, or his dad, or Ronald Reagan, or Richard Nixon, that ultimate victim of East Coast disdain. Each of whom, once elected, did his level best to shower the nation's elite with policy gifts of every description.

The massive distortions and contradictions between these two rightwing populisms should be plain to anyone with eyes. One populism rails against liberals for eating sushi and getting pierced; the other celebrates those who eat sushi and get pierced as edgy entrepreneurs or as consumers just trying to be themselves. One despises Hollywood for pushing bad values; the other celebrates Hollywood for its creativity and declares that Hollywood merely gives the people what they want. And yet the same organizations, often the same individuals, are advocates of both.

Why aren't these contradictions crippling

media business, I stood up and pointed out that dozens of regular, church-going people across the Midwest shared the premises of the critique without knowing it - they simply mistook "liberalism" for the economic and corporate forces that actually do control things. I encouraged the speaker to make an effort to connect with those regular people and to try to turn their class resentment right-side up. I was corrected almost immediately by another audience member, who angrily said that she wanted no part of any effort to make an outreach to the Ku Klux Klan.

There is a grain of truth in the backlash stereotype of liberalism. Certain kinds of leftists really do vacation in Europe and drive Volvos and drink lattes. (Hell, almost everyone drinks lattes now.) And there is a small but very vocal part of the left that has nothing but contempt for the working class. Should you ever attend a meeting of a local animal rights organization, or wander through the campus of an elite university, you will notice that certain kinds of left politics are indeed activities reserved for members of the educated upper-middle-class, for people who regard politics more as a personal therapeutic exercise than an effort to build a movement. For them, the left is a form of mildly soothing spirituality, a way of getting in touch with the deep authenticity of the downtrodden and of showing you care. Buttons and stickers desperately announce the liberal's goodness to the world, as do his or her choice in consumer products. Leftist magazines treat protesting as a glamour activity, running photos of last month's demo the way society magazines print pictures from the charity ball.

Leftists like these aren't really interested in the catastrophic decline of the American left as a social force. For them, having fewer people on the left isn't a problem that might one day affect their material well-being, cost them their healthcare or their power in the workplace. Those things aren't on the line for this species of liberal. Standing up against the flag-waving masses is the goal for this variety of liberal. Being on the left is not about building common cause with others: it's about correcting others, about pointing out their shortcomings.

Until the American left decides to take a long, unprejudiced look at deepest America, at the kind of people who think voting for George Bush constitutes a blow against the elite, they are fated to continue their slide to oblivion.

A longer version of this article appeared originally in *Le Monde Diplomatique*.

COINTELPRO ALL OVER AGAIN? MIAMI POLICE SPY ON HIP HOP COMMUNITY

Police in Miami have set up a wide surveillance campaign of hip hop stars visiting the area including P. Diddy, DMX, 50 Cent and Ja Rule, and members of their entourages, according to the Miami Herald. Last May police from Miami, Los Angeles, Atlanta and other cities went to New York for a three-day training session where the NYPD distributed dossiers on hip hop stars. Cedric Muhammad, editor of the BlackElectorate.com and a former manager of the Wu Tang Clan, said the Miami spying incident is just a continuation of COINTELPO campaigns targeting the African American community. The Hip-Hop Summit Action Network has announced plans to sue the Miami and New York police departments.

CALIF. COUNTY BANS GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

On March 2, voters in California's Mendocino County passed the country's first ban on the growing of genetically altered crops. The victory got little attention nationally except in the boardrooms of Monsanto and Dow Chemical. CropLife America, a national biotech PR firm funded by the biotech giants, spent nearly \$700,000 trying to defeat the measure - that's nearly \$60 for every man, woman and child in the county.

NEW NUKES? BUSH INCREASES BUDGET FOR NUCLEAR WEAPON "STUDIES"

The Bush Administration has requested \$6.6 billion for nuclear weapons maintenance, research and development in its 2005 budget. This money includes researching low-yield "mini-nukes," which had been banned since 1994 until Congress lifted the prohibition last year. Nuclear monies are also intended for the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, a "bunker buster" weapon that has a yield, approximately 15 times greater than that of the bomb that obliterated Hiroshima. While the money is technically for studying these weapons, a recently leaked report from the Congressional Research Service said the sharp budget increase suggests the government plans to secretly build these weapons as well. Bush also requested money to decrease the time needed to prepare for a full-scale underground nuclear test, from 36 months to 24 months. This would be the first nuclear test explosion by the U.S. since 1992.

GROCERY WORKERS END STRIKE, DROP DEMANDS

59,000 grocery workers in California ended a four-month, 18-day strike on February 28 by settling with management and conceding most of their demands. The United Food and Commercial Workers union gave grocery workers only one day to read the contract before voting. Many who attended the contract ratification meetings were furious to hear that Safeway stores can lay off any workers at Vons supermarkets with less than 10 years' seniority, and that the union plans to take no punitive action against its members who crossed the picket line. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney praised the agreement which was seen as a defeat by many labor analysts.

MAD-PEN DISEASE

ANTI-WAR ACTIVISTS CONTEST POLICE USE OF BARRICADES AT PROTESTS

BY ALEX VITALE

Since 1996 the New York Police Department has had a policy of sealing political demonstrations behind metal barricades, claiming that this is necessary for public safety. In fact, these pens often stoke the confrontations they are supposed to prevent and are a violation of demonstrators' right to freely assemble.

The NYPD's policy of using metal pens at demonstrations emerged out of a rally at City Hall to celebrate the Yankees winning the 1996 World Series. During that event part of the crowd surged towards the stage. The police said the crowd created a potentially dangerous situation in which injuries might have occurred and access to the injured might have been hampered.

Chief Alan Hoehl, who was the commanding officer of Manhattan South, suggested the use of a complex system of barricades to create frozen zones and emergency lanes within large gatherings to ensure ease of exit for participants and access by emergency personnel. These pens are now a fixture at all demonstrations, large and small.

The pens, however, make it difficult to circulate within the demonstration area. This effectively undermines aspects of the right to assemble, such as distributing literature and collecting petition signatures.

The barricades are also a form of police intimidation. Anyone who was enclosed within the pens last Feb. 15 can tell you that it was a horrifying experience at times. Large

numbers of people were herded into pens, sometimes against their will and at times, were not allowed to leave. Many demonstrators say the pens made them feel trapped, and they feared for their safety.

In addition, the use of heavily policed chokepoints at the entrances to the pens allows the cops to control access to what is supposed to be a public event. Visual inspections and questioning by officers enhances the appearance of police intimidation. Bottlenecks at these chokepoints have also contributed in the past to people being turned away from demonstrations.

This March 9, United for Peace and Justice launched a campaign to end the use of pens asserting that, "The use of these barricades is part of the national assault on everyone's civil liberties and ability to dissent." While their immediate goal was to stop the use of pens at the antiwar protest scheduled for March 20, UFJ Coordinator Leslie Cagan said that this would probably need to be a long-term campaign tied to the Republican National Convention next August.

The New York Civil Liberties Union is also concerned about the use of demonstration pens. After last Feb. 15, it issued a report entitled "Arresting Protest," which outlined many of the police abuses that day. After reviewing hundreds of e-mail accounts and hours of videotape, they concluded that the pens increased confrontations between the police and demonstrators, which made the public less, not more safe. The problem with the pens was so severe that people filled surrounding streets. The police exacerbated the situation by attacking crowds with mounted

officers and pepper spray, resulting in injuries and arrests.

In contrast to the rings of steel barricades at demonstrations, many other large public gatherings in New York are handled differently. Every summer dozens of street fairs take place in Manhattan. These events draw tens of thousands of people and involve the closure of major avenues for hours. There are no pens, no frozen zones and no emergency lanes, and the only barricades used are wooden ones to keep crosstown traffic open.

Even more telling, hundreds of thousands of people gather every year to participate in major parades for Labor Day, St. Patrick's Day, Pride Day and Israel Day. These participants are never asked to assemble inside metal barricades. They gather in largely unregulated areas near the front of the march and on side streets.

The NYPD's policy of using demonstration pens is also out of step with most major police departments in the United States and around the world. Cities which have had large antiwar demonstrations recently, such as Washington, San Francisco, London, Rome, Barcelona and Sydney, did not force participants into subdivided steel holding pens. Cities with a history of political violence, including Tel Aviv, Belfast and Madrid, also avoided using pens. None of these cities or dozens of other had any significant problems during their permitted anti-war demonstrations.

You can review the NYCLU's report on the NYPD's treatment of the Feb. 15th protest and the use of pens at www.nyclu.org/arresting_protest_042803.html



How to find your G-spot

The G-spot is about two inches inside the vagina towards the belly, right behind the pubic bone. It's composed of spongy tissue that is

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wrapped around the urethra. When a woman is aroused, it becomes thicker as it fills with fluid and can be felt through the vaginal wall. Angle your penetration or select a curved sex toy and apply firm rhythmic pressure to pleasure the G-spot. Some women find this sensation highly sexual and some women expel a clear fluid

called female ejaculate (it's not urine) from G-spot stimulation. Every woman has a G spot, but not every woman loves having it pressed or otherwise stimulated. You'll just have to try it for yourself!

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JOHN KERRY



& THE 'WINTER SOLDIER INVESTIGATION' OF U.S. WAR CRIMES IN VIETNAM

John Kerry then and now:

"How do you ask a man to be the last man to die in Vietnam? How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?" — April 23, 1971

"We need to add 40,000 troops... to the American military in order to meet our responsibilities elsewhere - especially in the urgent global war on terror." — December 16, 2003

"We now have a solemn obligation to complete the mission, in that country [Iraq] and in Afghanistan. Iraq is now a major magnet and center for terror." — February 27, 2004

BY CHRISTOPHER DAY

Facing mounting questions about President George W. Bush's National Guard service, or lack thereof, his supporters have sought to shift attention to the Vietnam-era antiwar activities of his opponent, Senator John Kerry.

Attacks have been directed at Kerry for testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 22, 1971. The passage that gets quoted the most is one where Kerry speaks of U.S. soldiers who "personally raped, cut off ears, cut off heads, taped wires from portable telephones to human genitals and turned up the power, cut off limbs, blew up bodies, randomly shot at civilians, razed villages in fashion reminiscent of Ghengis Khan, shot cattle and dogs for fun, poisoned food stocks, and generally ravaged the countryside of South Vietnam."

Right-wing commentators have been regurgitating this passage to suggest that Kerry had engaged in a wild-eyed slander of his fellow veterans.

What Kerry's critics don't mention, and what Kerry himself is unlikely to explain, is the reason for his testimony. Kerry was speaking on behalf of the Winter Soldier Investigation conducted by Vietnam Veterans Against the War, of which Kerry was a member. The Winter Soldier Investigation consisted of three days of testimony by more than 150 honorably discharged Vietnam vets, many of them highly decorated. The vets described war crimes that they had personally participated in or witnessed.

The Winter Soldier Investigation took its name from the words of Thomas Paine in 1776 who spoke of "sunshine patriots" and "summertime soldiers" who deserted at Valley Forge.

The returning Vietnam vets saw themselves as "winter soldiers," still fighting, but now to end the war. The investigation consists of hundreds of pages of detailed accounts of all manner of atrocities against the Vietnamese. It is impossible to read this testimony without concluding that the very logic of the U.S. war made such war crimes inevitable.

While Kerry continues to uphold his opposition to the Vietnam War, he has long since retreated from the implications of the Winter Soldier Investigation. His campaign website emphasizes his commitment to veterans' issues but completely ignores both the investigation and his own powerful denunciation of massive U.S. war crimes.

More than 100,000 U.S. soldiers are now rotating home from Iraq, and people in the U.S. will begin to hear what the war is really like from the men and women who have been fighting it. No doubt many vets will repeat the platitudes they have been fed about their "noble mission" to "establish democracy" in Iraq, and others will just keep quiet. But some will choose to speak out about the crimes of the U.S. war and occupation. And as the war drags on, their numbers will likely increase.

But when it comes to the issue of continuing the Iraq occupation, Kerry, like the rest of the Democratic Party leadership, stands shoulder to shoulder with Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Bush. They



JOHN KERRY

SUPPORTS:

- WAR & OCCUPATION IN IRAQ
- "USA PATRIOT" ACT
- N.A.F.T.A., F.T.A.A., OTHER "FREE" TRADE POLICIES



A MOMENT OF CONSCIENCE: Kerry has evolved from a moral opponent of the Vietnam War to an advocate for the current occupation of Iraq. **Above:** Soldier throws medals back at the government during 1971 Vietnam Veterans Against the War protest.

understand that what is at stake in Iraq is the power of the U.S. to impose its will on the rest of the world.

John Kerry long ago abandoned the moral outrage at the crimes of U.S. imperialism that he voiced before the Senate in 1971. But Kerry's testimony, and even more important the testimony of so many veterans before the Winter Soldier Investigation, has not lost its power.

SPANISH VOTERS OUST BUSH LOYALIST



ONE DOWN

BY JEFF COHEN

Political shock in Spain! blared ABC News on the night regime change came to Madrid. Along with Britain's Tony Blair, Spain's conservative prime minister Jose Maria Aznar had been the staunchest of Bush allies. One down, two to go.

The deciding issue in Spain's election was government deceit over the war in Iraq and terrorism at home, especially the bomb blasts that rocked Madrid three days before the balloting. In a country (like ours) where major TV channels routinely echo government propaganda, grassroots activists defeated Aznar's Popular Party by reaching swing voters and young voters through mobile phones, the Internet and creative, nonviolent protests.

For weeks polls had showed Aznar's hand-picked successor comfortably ahead of Spain's uninspiring Socialist Party, which had been voted out of office in 1996 amid corruption scandals. Then came the March 11 terror attacks, killing 201 Spaniards and injuring 1,500.

The conservative government that had brought Spain into the Iraq war (despite overwhelming opposition) by echoing U.S./U.K. lies on WMDs immediately blamed the Madrid terror attacks on Basque separatists — before there was any evidence. It continued to do so in the face of evidence pointing to Islamist terrorists.

By election day, government manipulation had become the salient issue in the minds of millions of shell-shocked swing voters. But the seeds of doubt about Aznar's government had been planted by the antiwar movement. After all, intelligence on Iraq had been manipulated; now it seemed Spain was manipulating the truth about who had murdered hundreds of Spaniards. It leaked out that, within hours of the terror attacks, Spain's foreign minister had written ambassadors: "You should use any opportunity to confirm [Basque] ETA's responsibility."

In his vivid street-level account from Madrid in the hours before the election, writer Paul Laverty described a mass nonviolent revolt. One grandmother told Laverty that she had voted conservative the last time, "but I can't vote for these thugs again who led us into a war nobody wanted. They lied about the weapons in Iraq, and they're lying again today. How dare they manipulate the dead?"

With suspicions mounting that the government was holding back the truth about the terror attacks, and that mainstream TV couldn't be trusted, thousands of cell phones were on the go flashing messages between friends about independent news and spontaneous protests that became massive the night before the election. In cities across Spain, protesters gathered outside Popular Party headquarters.

Then, at a time established through mobile messaging, came "cacerolada" protests — banging of pots and pans — from balconies and porches and spreading into town squares. After midnight, Madrid protesters marched to the Atocha train station, near ground zero of the terror attacks, and the huge crowd went silent for a vigil and prayers and tears.

After winning, Socialist Prime Minister-elect Zapatero called for "self-criticism" by Bush and Blair: "You can't bomb people just in case... You can't organize a war on the basis of lies," he said.

Jeff Cohen is a columnist, media critic and TV pundit. A version of this story appeared on commondreams.org.

TESTIMONY FROM THE WINTER SOLDIER INVESTIGATION

On Operation Stone... Before we went out on the operation we were told... we were going to destroy all the villages and we didn't give the people any time to get out of the villages. We just went in and burned them, and if people were in the villages yelling and screaming, we didn't help them... I saw one case where a woman was shot by... one of our snipers... When we got up to her she was asking for water. And the Lt. said to kill her. So he ripped off her clothes, they stabbed her in both breasts, they spread-eagled her and shoved an E-tool up her vagina, an entrenching tool, and she was still asking for water. And then they took that out and they used a tree limb and then she was shot.

— Sgt. Scott Camille, 1st Marine Division

We were out about five o'clock in the morning... when they spotted this old woman about... So these guys decided that they would play a little game and they let her run about fifty yards and they'd fire in front of her so she'd have to turn around, and then they'd let her run another direction and then they'd cut her off. This went on about a half hour until the time the sun started to come up. So then they decided it best to eliminate her as soon as possible, so they just ripped her off right there... Her only crime was being out, probably tending to her buffalo, before the time she should have been.

— Ted Eckert, 1st Marine Air Wing

We used to drive by this row of hootches and a little three-year-old kid in dirty gray shorts used to run out and scream "You Marines, Number 10" and we'd always go back, "Oh fuck you kid," and all this stuff. So one night the kid comes out and says "Marines, you Number 10," and throws a rock. So we figured we'd get him because this was a way of having fun. The next night before we went out we... picked up the biggest rocks we could get our hands on and piled them in the back of the truck. So when we left the Combat Base we just turned the corner and we saw a little kid, we were waiting for the kid — he ran out of the hootch — and he was going to scream, "Marine Number 10," and we didn't even let him get it out of his mouth. We just picked up all the rocks and smeared him. We just wiped him out... It was looked upon as funny... And also we had this habit... we'd take C ration crackers and put peanut butter on it and stick a trioxylene heat tab in the middle and put peanut butter around it and let the kid munch on it. Now they were always looking for "Chop Chop" and the effect more or less of trioxylene is to eat the membranes out of your throat and if swallowed, would probably eat holes through your stomach.

— Corporal Bill Hatton, 3rd Marine Division

John Kerry's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: www.cwes01.com/13790/23910/ktpp179-210.pdf

Winter Soldier Investigation Testimony: lists.village.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Winter_Soldier/WIS_entry.html

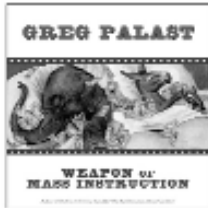
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TEEN SOLDIERS



Continued from cover

between this and the military." Program leaders claim that they do not encourage the cadets to join the military — "all we want them to do is become productive citizens," insists Williams — but at least two graduates have enlisted in the past three years, and others in the program plan to do the same.

Jose Gonzalez is a stocky, friendly 17-year-old who has been in the Junior Cadets since its founding and is looking forward to graduating from it this year. He signed up for the army a few months ago under the deferred enlistment program and is now a member of the Junior Reserves. He animatedly discusses the karate classes he helps to lead, and repeatedly emphasizes that he feels the program offered him an out from a potentially bleak future.

He pauses for a second when asked why he decided to go into the military. "Look, when I met Tony Williams he persuaded me to go into the army for the benefits, but if I hadn't met Tony Williams I probably wouldn't have made it past grade school," he says, standing up straight and gesticulating firmly. "The major put a lot of investment in me, and I respect him. He's put a lot back into the community." As if on cue, Williams comes up behind Gonzalez, rubbing a fist brusquely across his buzz cut and catching him by surprise momentarily. "We call him *el payaso*," Williams says, grinning. "That means clown in Spanish."

Many parents and cadets in the program express similar indebtedness when talking about Williams, and it is about more than just the five hours once a week. Williams has made a point of combining his weekly trainings with involvement in the cadets' lives. He often signs on as an emergency contact or acts as a liaison or translator with

their schools, seeking tutors when necessary and taking on a disciplinary role even in the cadets' homes.

Williams is interrupted briefly to answer his ever-ringing cell phone. It's a worried mother on the other end, calling as if to illustrate the point: "Which grades dropped?" he asks, "English and math?" He pauses to pull out a pen and scrap of paper from his uniform breast pocket, "O.K., give me the number. Yeah, I'll talk to him." He snaps the phone closed, "See, before he came to me, his school didn't even know who he was, he cut class so much, they didn't even know his name. Now somebody knows who he is."

But at a time when more than 100,000 U.S. troops are at war in Iraq, youth military training programs are coming under fire for targeting low-income areas. Some say there is a "poverty draft" at work. (See p.9)

"The JROTC started in New England and the South in white, middle and upper-class areas as an attempt to identify future officers, as a way to groom privileged kids for successful careers in the military," says Kevin Ramirez of the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO). "It changed drastically and began invading urban, poor and minority areas after the Los Angeles riots in 1992. Colin Powell went to Watts and saw the poverty, the desperation that led to them turning on their own community and decided that discipline and father figures were what was missing in the ghettos. He went back to Washington and recommended that these programs get extended and be encouraged in the inner cities."

Since then, JROTC and similar programs have multiplied in poor neighborhoods. But they are

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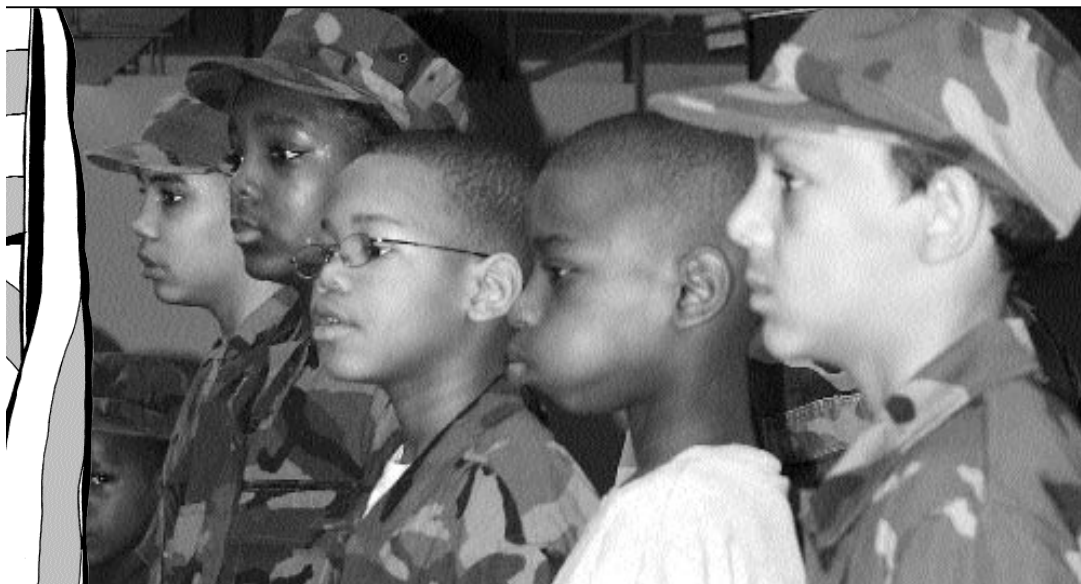
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JUNIOR CADETS AT ATTENTION: Dozens of Bed-Stuy parents hope military-style training will instill discipline. Critics worry that programs like these funnel youth into the armed forces. PHOTO: ALEX STONEHILL

not grooming officers, says the CCCO. According to the group's web site, 54 percent of JROTC participants and half of the military's front-line troops are people of color. "JROTC graduates are recruited directly into the lowest military ranks," it says. "The military targets low-income schools in the same way tobacco and alcohol companies target low-income communities."

Another criticism of military recruitment in low-income neighborhoods is that it capitalizes on kids' inability to afford higher education by promising big college money.

"We stress higher education here. We want to help them through this period in their lives and then help them become productive citizens," says Sheila Williams, executive director for St. Stephens outreach. "But unfortunately, because these kids don't have any money they seek the military in order to pursue that higher education. I tell them to make sure they know what they're signing on for."

"If a young person walks into a recruitment center and says 'I want to join the military so I can get money for college,'" says Ramirez, "the recruiter has pamphlets to take home from 50 different programs that promise him higher education, but the fact is that 50 percent of service people never get or use that money. You have to serve four years active duty before you ever really qualify. By then you are four years behind your peers, and you have four more years of reserve duty to contend with while you're trying to study."

Williams emphatically disagrees with the concept of a poverty draft. "It's not true," he says. "That's not the way the army is. There's no draft of any kind, nobody's making them do it, nobody made you go. It's like any other job. You have the option of leaving whenever you want."

Some have wondered if there aren't other ways of teaching young people the kind of discipline, commitment and structure they receive in military training. "In Atlanta, there are programs that apply the same sort of structure and discipline to an educational program," says Ramirez. "Those programs emphasize personal responsibility just as much as military programs do."

But Williams believes that only strict military training can really affect these kids' lives dramatically. "You can not train a kid to sit down and learn with a basketball. Because so many of these kids have not experienced discipline, they don't know what discipline is, and to my surprise a lot of them love it, because to them somebody cares, it's not like 'here, go play PlayStation.' I'm in your face, 'Why haven't you done your homework? Why didn't you pass the test? Did you study?'"

That philosophy and discipline has certainly

affected Jose Gonzalez's life. "If I hadn't been in the cadets, here's what would have happened: I would've been dead, or I would've been locked up, and I wouldn't have even made it past the ninth grade." Now he's looking forward to high-school graduation and then the army. Though he complains that the Junior Cadets are "too militaristic some-

times," he grows excited when asked about the possibility of going to Iraq. "I love fighting," he says. "I fight on the streets, I'll fight in the army. I'll go to Iraq and pull Osama bin Laden to pieces. When I find Osama bin Laden, the first thing I'm going to do is kick him in his chin."

DYING FOR A DREAM THE POVERTY DRAFT

BY JOHN TARLETON

Raheen Tyson Heigher of Bay Shore, New York, dreamed of going away to college and becoming an artist. Lacking funds and unable to qualify for enough financial aid, Heigher enlisted in the army in the summer of 2001 to pay for his college dream. "It works," wrote *Newsday's* Jimmy Breslin, "unless you wind up in Iraq and come home in a box." On July 24, Heigher, 22, was killed when his convoy was ambushed outside of Baghdad.

For many disadvantaged youth like Haigher, faced with meager job opportunities, unaffordable colleges, crime-ridden neighborhoods and a voracious prison-industrial complex, the military has become an attractive option.

For its part, the Pentagon's 2003 recruiting budget totalled nearly \$4 billion, according to the General Accounting Office. The military targets high-achieving, low-income youth with commercials, video games, personal visits and slick brochures. It pays off. Despite the continuing war in Iraq, all four branches (army, air force, navy, marines) reported last September they had once again met their annual recruiting goals.

According to the *Washington Post*, 38 percent of the military's enlisted personnel are people of color, while they make up only 29 percent of the general population. In the largest branch, the army, the percentage of people of color is near half of all enlistees, at 45 percent.

African-Americans alone account for nearly 30 percent of army enlistees, according to Defense Department statistics compiled in 2000. Black women comprise nearly half the army's enlisted women. While Latinos represent only 9 percent of the army versus 12 percent of

the population, their number is rapidly growing. In Puerto Rico, where there is 40 percent unemployment, the army recruits four times as many soldiers on average as it does on the mainland. Some 37,000 (mostly-Spanish speaking) U.S. troops are "green-card soldiers" like Jose Gutierrez, a former Guatemala City street orphan who walked to the United States, joined the military in hopes of gaining citizenship and was among the first American soldiers killed in the war.

For every up-by-the-bootstraps success story, there are many other soldiers who encounter new roadblocks to achieving their dreams once they join the military. The present-day GI bill is fraught with loopholes and stringent conditions that cause many soldiers to lose their educational benefits. Two-thirds of all recruits never get any college aid from the military and only 15 percent go on to finish a four-year college degree, according to the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors.

Soldiers looking to pick up vocational skills often find themselves training on equipment that is either obsolete or is specialized military equipment, leaving them with no real world skills. Twenty percent of all soldiers will also receive less-than-honorable discharges, which will leave them facing a lifetime of employment discrimination. Fifty percent of soldiers in military prisons are African-American.

"They tell you that the military is voluntary, but that concept for blacks and poor whites is like a rat being dropped in a maze," Ronald Walters, a University of Maryland political science professor told the *Washington Post*. "The playing field outside the military is not level. Life structures you into certain choices, and you wind up in the military."

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June 5: Protest against Israel's "separation wall," on the 37th anniversary of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and beginning of Israel's occupation

July 26-29: Democratic National Convention protests in Boston

August 29: "The World Says No to the Bush Agenda:" Massive march and rally at the Republican National Convention in New York City, organized by United for Peace and Justice

August 30 - September 2: Republican National Convention meets; additional protest activities all week long

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U.S. FORCES LIBERATE IRAQI VILLAGE OF ALL ITS MEN

By DANA VISALLI

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—The village of Abu Siffa is a small farming community resting on the banks of the Tigris River, some 50 miles north of Baghdad. The town consists of modest brick and stucco homes scattered almost randomly among citrus groves, all inter-connected by narrow, winding roadways and paths. Inside, the homes are spare and comfortable, with little in the way of furniture, but graced with wall-to-wall carpets and pillows. Women in black abayas chatter and laugh as they pass along the paths, and flocks of children flit about from field to town.

At 2 a.m. on the night of Dec. 16, 2003, the people of Abu Siffa were startled awake by the roar of tanks and trucks, humvees and helicopters, as the U.S. Army entered the village. The Fourth Infantry Division was paying a house call. Acting on a tip, the army was trying to catch members of the armed resistance that has been confronting the U.S. military occupation of Iraq.

Every house in the village was surrounded, front doors were broken down and the terrified occupants ordered out into the yards in their nightclothes. All the men present were handcuffed, hooded with plastic bags over their heads and taken away. Women and children were herded together in the dark night while soldiers ransacked the homes, searching for weapons. Few were found, but \$17,000 in Iraq dinars — savings belonging to the villagers — was removed by U.S. soldiers.

On succeeding nights U.S. tanks returned, and after warning occupants to vacate their homes, destroyed several of them with tank shells and machine-gun fire. The house of the one suspected insurgent, a former Ba'ath party official, was torched by lighting a barrel of kerosene in the living room.

Eighty-three Iraqi men were taken from the village. They included three human rights lawyers, three juveniles 14-16 years old, 10 secondary school teachers and 67 farmers, 14 of whom are 60-80 years old. They were arrested either because they were suspected resistance members, or in an effort to dissuade people in the area from collaborating with opposition forces.

They have never been charged so it is not known what their criminal offense was thought to be. It has to date proved impossible even for family members to visit them.

When queried, the commander of the operation, Col. Nate Sassaman, initially indicated that the raids and detentions were necessary for "national security." Two months later, U.S. forces admitted that the detainees were only guilty by association, that is, they lived in the same village as the former Ba'ath party official. Nevertheless, none of the men have been released.

Our delegation of Americans and Canadians from Christian Peacemaker Teams was understandably anxious about how we would be received in Abu Siffa when we visited, which we did on Feb. 23.

Sitting on rugs and pillows, with demitasses of hot tea in hand, we listened as the story of the raids unfolded. This was recounted by the two men remaining in the village, Mohammed and Fawaz, and by Hani, who joined us from another village. In the course of an army raid in his town, Hani's father suffocated and died when a plastic bag was placed over his head. He was asked if he was seeking financial compensation from the U.S. for his loss. His response was that he only wanted us "to tell the truth" to the American people.

Soon it was time for us to make the return trip to Baghdad. When a team member took a moment to apologize for the violence done by the U.S. military, the tears began to flow. Hani seemed deeply touched and told us, "Thank you for feeling... The drops that come from the eyes are very meaningful to us."

For more reports go to www.vitw.org



A PRISON CALLED IRAQ: A former intelligence service employee being arrested during a demonstration last October in Baghdad. The U.S. admits to holding at least 11,000 Iraqis in detention camps. Human rights groups in Iraq say the number is at least double that.
PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

U.S.-BACKED EXILES ALLEGED TO RUN DEATH SQUADS

By STEPHEN GREY

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—On the morning of his death, Jan. 19, 2004, Professor Abdullatif Ali al-Mayah left his house as he always did at 8 a.m. in his metallic-blue 4x4, a Hyundai Galloper II. Another professor who lived in the same housing compound, Sarhan Abbas, took the passenger seat.

Al-Mayah drove down the main road, past shops and an empty plot of rubbish-strewn land. Just before a side road leading to a motorway, the road swings to the left and he slowed down. About a hundred meters farther on, al-Mayah was forced by a large pothole to slow again, and his attackers sprung their trap.

Al-Mayah, 54, was a prominent human rights campaigner and an opponent of the American and British occupation of Iraq. Just 12 hours earlier, on al-Jazeera TV, he had denounced the corruption of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) and demanded universal elections as soon as possible. "I can endure any Iraqi government," he said, "but the feeling of being under occupation is terrible for me."

His friend Abbas recalled how he died. "Suddenly, a group of seven or eight men with their faces concealed appeared from a side road. Thinking they were carjackers, he was ready to hand them the keys. Then the attackers shot al-Mayah more than 20 times."

There are many such deaths in Baghdad every day: al-Mayah, director of the Baghdad Center for Human Rights, was the fourth Mustansiriya University professor to be slain.

Al-Mayah was not a victim of the struggle between "occupying forces" and the "resistance". He was crushed as a liberal force that stood between those positions. Not everyone gets this point. A *New York Times* article about the same murder implied that anti-U.S. forces were responsible. It quoted the coalition's military spokesman, Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, saying: "By silencing urban professionals, the guerrillas are waging war on Iraq's fledgling institutions and on progress itself. This works against everything we're trying to do here." But typically the *Times* underplayed al-Mayah's determined opposition to U.S. occupation. It seems unlikely he was a target for the "resistance", even though he supported calls for the elections that many Sunni guerrillas fear.

So who was responsible for his murder? A senior Iraqi police commander told me: "Dr Abdullatif was becoming more and more popular because he spoke for people on the street here. He made some politicians quite jealous." But, he said, al-Mayah's killing was just like the seven other political assassinations carried out in the previous four weeks in the same small district. All

remained unsolved. Then the leather-clad commander looked at me sternly and demanded that his name never be printed.

He had a strong suspicion about who was behind most of these killings, he said. "You can look no further than the Governing Council. There are political parties in this city who are systematically killing people. They are politicians that are backed by the Americans and who arrived to Iraq from exile with a list of their enemies. I've seen these lists. They are killing people one by one."

Others in Baghdad confirmed the police commander's story. In what might be called "death by Google," the names of some quite moderate figures, only tenuously connected with the old regime, appear on internet lists as Saddam supporters. Preventing the purges of such people is not a priority for U.S. and British forces.

As one British officer told me: "There is a kind of de-Ba'athification going on, a violent one, but it will come to its own natural conclusion."

Al-Mayah's brother said the professor had received many e-mails advising him to be less outspoken in his criticism of the IGC. At least one came from an IGC member. "He never told me the name of this man, only that he... had come back from exile after the Americans invaded. He told me the man never actually threatened him. It was a sort of warning that it would be safer if he left the country."

The list of murder suspects is long. Some of the exiles who have returned from London, Washington or Tehran are armed to the teeth. Among the abandoned villas of former Mukhabarat (intelligence service) generals, which are now occupied by the "new" politicians, I've met some who clear heaps of revolvers from their breakfast tables as though they were used coffee mugs.

Many are quite shameless in their threats. Last December, in a sermon in the southern city of Najaf, Sadr al-Din al-Kobanchi, a senior Shia cleric and member of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, which holds power on the IGC, was categorical: "The Ba'ath Party is against God and the Prophet." He told former regime loyalists: "Leave your jobs at the ministries and institutions and companies — or all the workers will kill you by their own hands."

The militias that kill so professionally in Baghdad also flourish in southern Iraq's mainly Shia areas. Under the noses of the occupying forces, the militias enforce their own kind of law and order. In Basra, they helped to re-establish order when the Ba'athists fled. Now, with a strong influence over the new, British-trained police forces, they continue to eliminate not only political opponents but also those, such as alcohol sellers, who violate what they regard as Islamic law.

A version of this article first appeared in the *New Statesman*.

HAITI IN THE SHADOW OF AMERICAN EMPIRE

BY NIRIT BEN-ARI WITH BILL WEINBERG

The overthrow of Jean-Bertrand Aristide has been in the making since December 1990, when Haiti's first free election was held. A populist priest backed by a vigorous grass-roots movement known as Lavalas, Aristide won with a two-thirds majority.

But seven months later, Aristide's government was overthrown in a military coup. No government recognized the military junta, but as Noam Chomsky noted: "Washington maintained close intelligence and military ties with the new rulers while undermining the embargo called by the Organization of American States, even authorizing illegal shipments of oil to the regime and its wealthy supporters."

In July 1993 the United States pressured Aristide to sign the Governor's Island Accord with the junta. The accord forbade him from running for re-election once he was restored to power, and gave amnesty to the junta's death-squad terrorists. The junta refused to abide by the accord, prompting President Clinton to send in troops in September 1994.

Aristide finished his term, although conditions imposed on him as the cost of returning to power — such as an IMF-style "free market" reform of the economy — eroded his popularity. But Aristide continued to stand up to the IMF and international creditors, demanding a better deal that would not impose yet harsher austerity on Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1995 Rene Preval, an Aristide ally, was elected president. His government faced serious political deadlock, and in 1999 he declared that parliament's term had expired and began ruling by decree.

Aristide was elected again in November 2000, overwhelmingly defeating Marc Bazin, a former World Bank official backed by the White House. The United States and international donors blocked financial aid, alleging the elections were "flawed." That paralyzed Aristide, leaving him with no funds to implement his social plans for the country. The Inter-American Development Bank did not resume loan programs until July 2003.

Meanwhile, Aristide's opposition, including paramilitary leaders from the 1991-94 military junta, was stockpiling money and weapons. Ira Kurzban, general counsel to the Haitian government, told "Democracy Now" Feb. 25 that the U.S. government was directly backing the anti-Aristide rebels. "This is a military operation," he said. "It's not a rag-tag group of liberators, as has often been put in the press."

Haitian police — a force of fewer than 5,000 in a country of 8 million — were outnumbered and outgunned in many areas by the rebel forces. The country has no army, as Aristide abolished it after his return to power in 1994.

France called for Aristide's resignation in late February, as the rebels seized the northern half of the country. The French hold grudges against Aristide for his demand last April that they pay back the \$22 billion (adjusted for inflation and interest) that Haiti had to pay for French recognition.

Ironically, the uprising came weeks after Haiti celebrated the bicentennial of its independence from France. It became the first black-ruled republic in the world on Jan. 1, 1804.

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT BEHIND COUP?

In a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell, Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) criticized the Bush administration. "It has been clear to me for some time that the State Department has been trying to undermine President Aristide." She called the revolt "a power-grab" by the same forces who were behind the 1991 coup, and urged the State Department to "discontinue" its actions in support of "violent protesters and thugs" in Haiti.

The *New York Times* reported Feb. 12 that US officials "hint[ed]" the Bush administration might support replacing Aristide — although he had two years left in office and was elected democratically.

WHO IS ANDRÉ "ANDY" APAID?

The Haitian political opposition — allied with the armed rebels — was led by André "Andy" Apaid, also head of Alpha Industries, one of the oldest and largest assembly factories in Haiti. As *New York's Haiti Progress* reported in November, Apaid's father was a close friend of dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. In a recent interview broadcast by the BBC Caribbean Service, Apaid voiced support for rioters in Gonaives who had torched government buildings. He led the opposition's "Group of 184," a supposedly broad front of "civil society" organizations modeled on similar anti-government coalitions in Hugo Chavez's Venezuela and Salvador Allende's Chile.

Louis Jodel Chamblain, one of the rebels' three military commanders, was a prominent death-squad leader in the 30-year Duvalier dictatorship and a founder of the Front for the Advancement of Progress of the Haitian People, which terrorized the nation after the first coup against Aristide. He recently returned from the Dominican Republic, where he'd fled in 1994 after being convicted of murder.

OTTO REICH AND THE CONTRA CONNECTION

Kevin Pina, writing for the on-line Black Commentator last April, noted that Bush administration official Otto Reich had arrived in Haiti as the U.S. invasion of Iraq began in 2003. Reich



Above: Pro-Aristide supporters in the Champs de Mars in the weeks before the coup.

Below: Burning tires after the demonstration turns violent and shots are fired.

The first night Port-au-Prince's Champs de Mar Square next to the National Palais was almost filled with demonstrators. Next day was a general strike; by morning the Champs de Mar was filled with angry demonstrators. They told me not to take pictures — their problem isn't with the American people but with US policies towards Haiti — specifically U.S. support of a "terrorist" student group! Adoring Aristide as Haiti's first democratically elected president in 200 years of independence, they were adamant he serve out his term. Shouting slogans like "Cinq Ans" and showing five fingers (five more years for Aristide), they let me shoot pictures after I joined in. The crowd became aggressive and violent, with lots of gunfire, while in the streets there were barricades and burning tires. People ran scared. Downtown were more pro-Aristide demonstrators, while reportedly there were anti-government student protestors mostly in the rich suburb of Petion Ville.

PHOTOS & CAPTION: MUSTAFA ONDER



claimed to be there to broker an agreement between the Aristide government and the opposition. His visit coincided with reports from the Haitian police that uniformed soldiers from the abolished army had begun regular incursions into the Central Plateau region of the country from the Dominican Republic.

In the 1980s, Reich was a key figure in the US government's sponsorship of terrorist rebels trying to overthrow Nicaragua's leftist government. Today he is a mastermind of the counterinsurgency war in Colombia, and has been named as a behind-the-scenes figure in the failed April 2002 coup against President Chavez in Venezuela.

WHEN A COUP IS NOT A COUP

BY CHRISTIAN ROSELUND

All coups are born in the American embassy," said Haitian-American activist Ray LaForest told the *Independent* the week after the exit of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Aristide was the first democratically elected leader of Haiti, and despite the frequent appearance of the word 'democracy' in Bush administration speechmaking, the United States appears to have been involved in his removal. Speaking from the Central African Republic where he was being held, Aristide told *Democracy Now!* that "It wasn't a resignation. It was a kidnapping and under the cover of coup d'etat," and that it was done by Americans.

Secretary of State Colin Powell has told reporters that, "He was not kidnapped. We did not force him onto the airplane. He went onto the airplane willingly. And that's the truth." When Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was briefly removed from power in April 2002 the White House and U.S. media

also presented it as a voluntary departure rather than a coup.

Surrounded in the capital by an army and defended by untrained and lightly armed police. The United States watched the removal of a democratically-elected government, yet had manpower to spare the day after Aristide was whisked away.

So if this was all just a big mistake, why not fly Aristide back on the same chartered U.S. plane that brought him to Africa?

The overthrow of Aristide was anything but accidental.

Many in the 'opposition' who surrounded Port-Au-Prince were carrying M16s, an American assault rifle. On Nov. 25, 2002, the *Miami Herald* reported on the shipment of 20,000 M16s from the U.S. to Haiti's neighbor, the Dominican Republic, a country facing no serious threats. Guy Phillippe, who tried to overthrow Aristide two years ago, was given asylum in the Dominican Republic and had reportedly assembled insurgent forces from there.

The Congressional Black Caucus has called for an investigation into the U.S. involvement. Now South Africa and CARICOM, an organization of Caribbean nations, with the support of Venezuela's Chavez, are calling for the U.N. to investigate Aristide's removal. Locally, nearly a thousand Haitians marched in Brooklyn to support Aristide the day before the coup.

The situation in Haiti is dire. Former army members, FRAPH (a paramilitary group with a record of terror) loyalists and other violent elements massacred Aristide supporters in Port-au-Prince, with the U.S. military looking on. The newly installed Prime Minister, Gerard LaTortue, is a business consultant who has lived in a gated community in Florida for 10 years. The feared 'Baby Doc', son of former Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier, has even considered returning to Haiti, stating that, "the political climate has improved."

France, where Baby Doc is currently exiled, is also a party to these events. Dominique de Villepin, the French foreign minister reports that: "Mr. Bush telephoned Mr. Chirac to

express delight over the excellent French-American cooperation in Haiti and to thank France for its action."

France strongly opposed any U.N. support for Aristide, perhaps because Aristide has asked France to repay the 60 million francs (now valued at \$22 billion) that Haiti was forced to pay the French from 1838 to 1922.

As *The Independent* goes to press, Aristide flew into Jamaica accompanied by supporters. The Jamaican and Venezuelan governments have refused to recognize the new regime. Hugo Chavez has also offered Aristide asylum, saying that, "The doors of Venezuela are always open to President Aristide."

James Foley, the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, has stated that, "His coming within 150 miles from Haiti is promoting violence," evidence that Aristide is still seen as a threat to Washington's interests there. Jamaican and Venezuelan officials remain unfazed.

We will see what the coming months bring the troubled nation of Haiti, but the story isn't over.

PREVENTING GENOCIDE: EURO FORUM SEES THREAT

BY DONALD PANETH

At an international forum: Preventing Genocide, sponsored by the Swedish government in Stockholm Jan. 26-28, 2004, more than 1,000 persons from 55 countries, representatives of the United Nations and 13 other international organizations participated. Genocide can happen again, the forum's organizers said. As in the past, perhaps it already is happening without being recognized.

Forum participants approached the subject of genocide circumspectly but in many aspects significantly. Kristian Gerner and Klas-Goran Karlsson, professors of history at Sweden's Lund University, presented a background paper that reminded participants of previous genocidal campaigns. According to the authors, the last century has been witness to the Armenian genocide (1915-1918); genocide and terror in the Soviet Union during the 1930s; the Nazi death camps and their Jewish, Roma (gypsy), and other victims (1933-1945); genocide in Cambodia (1975-1979); the Rwandan genocide (1994); the Bosnian genocide (1992-1995).

Some participants objected to the paper's omission of the U.S. extermination of Native Americans and the Belgian theft of natural resources and decimation of Africans in the Congo.

Participants asked: How is genocide to be prevented?

They contended that the principles of State sovereignty need to be redefined and the terminology changed by introducing the term "atrocious crime", which includes genocide, crimes against humanity, and serious war crimes. They also insisted that the international community must intensify its attention to the systemic causes of genocidal thinking.

"No lessons about genocide prevention can be learned if the genocides are blotted out of the world's consciousness," Gerald Caplan, coordinator, Remembering Rwanda (website), said. "That's why it's important that the 10th anniversary of the Rwanda genocide be commemorated in April 2004."

"In 100 days, beginning April 6, 1994," Caplan recounted, "Hutu extremists in Rwanda mobilized tens of thousands of ordinary Hutu – the majority people – in an effort to exterminate all Tutsi in Rwanda. About three-quarters of all Tutsi were murdered, a total of between 600,000 and a million souls."

"Yet neither during the ominous build-up of violence and ethnic hatred nor during the genocide itself did the major powers take any of the actions that might first have prevented and later curtailed the genocide. Instead, the French government worked hand-in-glove with the government until the genocide was unleashed, while during the crisis the American government actively prevented reinforcements being sent to a pathetic United Nations military mission."

Preventing genocide means preventing wars, Peter Wallensteen of Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, said. "Wars have often repeated themselves with the same actors. There is a dynamics going from one war to the next. Systematic research also points to such dynamics in genocides."

A key preventive strategy to genocide must be to inoculate people against simple imagery, intolerance, and hatred, Wallensteen said.

The forum was a warning against violence, war, the possible use of nuclear weapons – and genocide.

Excerpts from the Pentagon report:

AN ABRUPT CLIMATE CHANGE SCENARIO AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR UNITED STATES NATIONAL SECURITY

OCTOBER 2003

Editor's Note: The release of a Pentagon report on global warming has been met with mixed reaction. In Europe it was front-page news, while many media outlets in the United States ignored it. The report's authors state that they are describing a worst-case scenario so as to analyze the national security implications. They write of global disaster within decades, but admit there is no way of ultimately knowing when such a scenario would come to pass. Much of the uncertainty is due to the crude nature of computer modeling, which they recommend improving. But evidence is nonetheless mounting that the Earth's climate is being destabilized from the accumulation of greenhouse gasses.

The report predicts global catastrophe leading to millions of deaths from war and natural disasters. According to the study, rapid climate change will challenge U.S. power and lead to nuclear conflict, mega-droughts, famine and widespread rioting across the world.

A representative from Greenpeace said, "You've got a President who says global warming is a hoax, and across the Potomac River you've got a Pentagon preparing for climate wars." The following is excerpted from the report.

BY PETER SCHWARTZ
AND DOUG RANDALL

There is substantial evidence to indicate that significant global warming will occur during the 21st century.... Recent research, however, suggests that there is a possibility that this gradual global warming... could lead to harsher winter weather conditions, sharply reduced soil moisture, and more intense winds in certain regions that currently provide a significant fraction of the world's food production. With inadequate preparation, the result could be

a significant drop in the human carrying capacity of the Earth's environment.

Nations with the resources to do so may build virtual fortresses around their countries, preserving resources for themselves.

THE WEATHER REPORT: 2010-2020

Northern Europe cools as a pattern of colder weather lengthens the time that sea ice is present over the northern North Atlantic Ocean... Cold air blowing across the European continent causes especially harsh conditions for agriculture. The combination of wind and dryness causes widespread dust storms and soil loss... By the end of the decade, Europe's climate is more like Siberia's.

United States. Colder, windier, and drier weather makes growing seasons shorter and less productive throughout the northeastern United States, and longer and drier in the southwest... agricultural areas suffer from soil loss due to higher wind speeds and reduced soil moisture... rising ocean levels continues along the shores. The United States turns inward, committing its resources to feeding its own population, shoring up its borders, and managing the increasing global tension.

China. China, with its high need for food supply given its vast population, is hit hard by a decreased reliability of the monsoon rains... Longer, colder winters and hotter summers...



stress already tight energy and water supplies. Widespread famine causes chaos and internal struggles...

NATURAL RESOURCES

The changing weather patterns and ocean temperatures affect agriculture, fish and wildlife, water and energy... Commercial fishermen that typically have rights to fish in specific areas will be ill equipped for the massive migration of their prey.

With only five or six key grain-growing regions in the world (U.S., Australia, Argentina, Russia, China, and India), there is insufficient surplus in global food supplies to offset severe weather conditions in a few regions at the same time – let alone four or five... Catastrophic shortages of water and energy supply – both which are stressed around the globe today – cannot be quickly overcome.

NATIONAL SECURITY

As abrupt climate change lowers the world's carrying capacity aggressive wars are likely to be fought over food, water, and energy. Deaths from war as well as starvation and disease will decrease population size...

Imagine eastern European countries, struggling to feed their populations with a falling supply of food, water, and energy, eyeing Russia... for access to its grain, minerals, and energy supply. Or, picture Japan, suffering from flooding along its coastal cities and contamination of its fresh water supply, eyeing Russia's Sakhalin Island oil and gas reserves as an energy source to power desalination plants and energy-intensive agricultural processes. Envision Pakistan, India, and China – all armed with nuclear weapons – skirmishing at their borders over refugees, access to shared rivers and arable land.

In this world of warring states, nuclear arms proliferation is inevitable. As cooling drives up demand, existing hydrocarbon supplies are stretched thin. With a scarcity of energy supply... nuclear energy will become a critical source of power, and this will accelerate nuclear proliferation as countries develop enrichment and reprocessing capabilities to ensure their national security.

For the full report go to www.ems.org/climate/pentagon_climatechange.pdf

NATIONAL REVIEW FATHEADS JUST DON'T GET IT

BLOWING HOT AIR

BY MIKE WU

The media response to the Pentagon report on climate change has been intense and predictable. Left-leaning publications have embraced it, calling for it to be a Democratic campaign centerpiece, while the right has been falling over itself in efforts to discredit not only the reports findings, but also the authors, and the other articles written about it.

One such example is a piece written for the *National Review* online by Iain Murray. His "Guest Commentary" is rampant with inaccuracies.

Murray writes:

"... The Pentagon had become 'interested' in the national security implications of a new ice age caused by the Gulf Stream shutting down as a result of global warming (something that seems to be the current zeitgeist of the

alarmist movement, given the impending disaster flick *The Day After Tomorrow*.)"

Murray fails to mention that the idea of the Gulf Stream shutting down was studied in a National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report called "Abrupt Climate Change." This NAS study was why the Pentagon report was commissioned, and its findings are referred to repeatedly throughout the Pentagon report.

Murray writes:

"Hordes of Canadians pouring across the border might indeed be a serious issue" for the U.S. in the event of abrupt climate change.

He fails to mention the colder, windier and drier weather that might come about in the northeast, leading to decreased agriculture production and increased soil moisture loss; the continued threat to the coastal regions due to rising ocean levels; and the fortressing of our borders as the rest of the world descends into a desperate struggle for survival.

Murray writes:

"... The comparison to terrorism is actually made not by the Pentagon but by British scientists on their own crusade to terrify America into adopting the Kyoto protocol..."

Not just David King, British chief science advisor, but Hans Blix, the United Nations' chief weapons inspector, have called climate change a greater threat than terrorism.

Murray writes:

"The report is... a 'what-if' exercise conducted by a couple of well-known 'futurist' consultants who presumably make a tidy sum from coming up with the sort of scenarios science-fiction fans enjoy creating at the weekends."

The authors of the report are Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall. Schwartz was once head of the Shell Oil Group Planning Department. Randall is a co-founder of the Global Business Network. Not exactly the science-fiction dreamers Murray makes them out to be.

OFF TO THE ARMS RACE

BY RHIANNA TYSON

Less than three years after the United States withdrew from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty in order to deploy a "missile defense system," there are signs of a revived arms race. On Feb. 18, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the successful test of a new type of warhead capable of evading any anti-ballistic missile system that the United States can build.

"Not a single country in the world has such a weapons system at the moment," Putin bragged. The warheads will be "capable of hitting targets continents away at hypersonic speed, with high precision and the ability of broad maneuver both in terms of altitude and direction of their flight," he added.

The tests were conducted as part of high-profile military exercises that many viewed as propaganda for Putin's re-election campaign.

"We can build weapons which will render any anti-missile system defenseless against an attack by Russia's strategic forces," said Colonel-General Yuri Baluyevsky, first deputy chief of staff, adding that the system will function like "a swarm of bees," zigzagging to evade any interceptor missiles. Russia hopes to deploy the new missiles by 2010.

In response, the United States barely flinched. Officials in both Washington and Moscow maintain that neither the U.S. missile defense system nor the new Russian warhead — an upgraded model of the Topol missile — is intended to target the other country.

Few people other than hard-line "Star Wars" advocates believe that shooting down

incoming missiles is possible with current technology. In fact, even the program's staunchest supporters acknowledge that Russian nuclear forces could easily overwhelm the U.S. missile defense system, which is scheduled to begin deployment this year in Alaska. The Bush administration insists that the system's purpose is to intercept missiles from terrorists or "rogue states."

Without the hindrance of the ABM Treaty, the United States is legally free to develop such "defenses." Disarmament and arms control advocates argue that any system designed to intercept and destroy incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles could also be used offensively. "Nuclear weapons will be wedded to missile defenses and high-tech conventional arms to perpetuate America's 'sole superpower' status," arms-control expert Michael Klare wrote in *The Nation* in 2002.

The offensive capabilities of an anti-ballistic missile system are not lost on Russia or, especially, China, whose limited nuclear capabilities — approximately 400 warheads — are no match for those of the United States, whose arsenal is approximately 9,000.

Russia and China are seeking an international treaty on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which the United States resolutely opposes. Nuclear watchdogs believe that China, the only recognized nuclear weapons state that has not ceased fissile material production, continues to beef up its nuclear arsenal. The new arms race is well underway — and Russia's development of a missile-evading warhead is just a minor step.

BUSH WEAPONS TESTING: LEAVE NO NUKE BEHIND

This month, the United States is conducting another subcritical nuclear test at the Nevada Test Site, under the code name UNICORN-1.

Before the signing of the 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty, the U.S., British and Soviet governments detonated 550 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere, poisoning the Earth with radioactive fallout. That treaty banned all nuclear test explosions above ground, but the three leading nuclear-weapons states continued to test bombs underground until the mid-1990s.

By the time the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty was negotiated in 1997, the total number of nuclear tests had reached 2,050. That treaty, if it entered into force, would have prohibited all full-scale nuclear tests — above and underground. But the United States was not willing to give up the option to expand its bloated nuclear arsenal. The Clinton administration sabotaged the negotiations in Geneva in order to provide for a loophole: subcritical testing.

Nuclear weapons proponents claim that subcritical testing, a test of the weapon's vitality in which the chain reaction does not reach a critical mass (and therefore explode), is a safe and effective way of maintaining the stockpile of U.S. nuclear weapons, which now hovers around 10,000.

Activists and nuclear weapons watchdog groups argue that subcritical testing is not so innocent. "If it were safe, they would never have taken it out of the labs and put it at the test site," argues Susi Snyder, a board member of the Shundahai Network, a U.S. indigenous-led environmental justice organization based in Nevada. "Subcritical tests leave pounds of plutonium only 100 feet from southern Nevada's largest water supply. Only one pound of plutonium, if evenly distributed in the atmosphere, would cause cancer in every living thing in the world."

Once the United States succeeded in exempting subcritical testing from the treaty, India, which has had nuclear weapons since 1972, opted out of the negotiations and detonated an atmospheric test in 1998. Pakistan, determined not to seem threatened by India's nuclear might, followed suit shortly thereafter.

Under various legal commitments, such as the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the International Court of Justice's 1996 advisory opinion on nuclear weapons, and numerous United Nations General Assembly resolutions, all nuclear weapons states are obliged to dismantle their nuclear arsenals irreversibly and verifiably. The U.S. Senate rejected the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty in 1999, the only legislative body in the world to do so.


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SPECIAL EVENTS

Wednesday, March 24th @ 7pm - Free
Rule of Power or Rule of Law? An Assessment of U.S. Policies and Actions Regarding Security-Related Treaties by Nicole Deller, Arjun Makhijani, and John Burroughs

Thursday, March 25th @ 7pm - Free
RELEASE PARTY: Navigating the Space Between Brilliance & Madness: A Reader and Roadmap of Bipolar Worlds with Sascha Scatter & Ashley McNamara

Saturday, March 27 - 8pm
WORD/LIFE: emcees and poets in the life An evening of LGBT hip-hop and spoken word featuring HBO Def Poetry's CLAUDIA ALICK and BUTTAFLYSOUL, plus live performances by B.O.E. and GOD-DES featuring TINA G. Hosted by Dutchboy and Paradigm of Phat Family Records.

Sunday, March 28th @ 7pm - Free
Join us for a Rant Fest! "We Got Issues!" is a performance based dialogue on civic transformation, politics, and feminine power.

REVIEWS

CULTURE, POLITICS & CRITICISM.

LEWIS AND CLARK IN AFGHANISTAN

The bicentennial of Lewis and Clark's Voyage of Discovery is being celebrated across the nation in every imaginable form, from musical reviews to backpacking tours retracing their boot-steps to PBS specials.

In signing a proclamation "designating 2003 through 2006 as the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration," President Bush said, "American history is filled with remarkable examples of heroism and adventure, and the voyage of Lewis and Clark is one of the most remarkable of them all... Their expedition became an epic of endurance and discovery, and that epic became an American legend which all Americans should know about, and they should teach their children about it, as well."

Let's for once take Bush at his word and learn more about that expedition. Its precursor was Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, which transformed relations between Occident and Orient into master and servant. That invasion generated the greatest output of scholarly activity in the 19th century. The citizens of the Near East were disciplined not only by European weaponry but also by the subtler tools of European scholarship: cartography, geography, linguistics, anthropology, literary study.

The intellectual army of a Napoleonic France was deployed to translate every aspect of the Arab world into a passive Oriental subject who could be controlled from the central intelligence agency of the French university. European pens were as mighty as her swords.

The imperialistic knowledge produced by the marriage of conquest in the Eastern field to scholarship in the Western classroom is what the late Edward Said called Orientalism. The Near East still suffers the consequences of that 200-year-old invasion.

The United States sanctified a similar alliance in its subjugation of Native Americans, beginning with Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery. Jefferson was not about to be bested by a Frenchman so he sent out a spying expedition, commissioned by the War Department.

That grand adventure was "an epic of endurance and discovery"

and our nation's Egyptian expedition. It was a trans-continental invasion to ostensibly discover a navigable water route to the Pacific Ocean. But the real motive was to transform relations between the United States government and Native American nations, who stood in the way of Manifest Destiny, into imperial master and servant.

William Clark was the Indian-killing general and Meriwether Lewis his Indiana Jones scholar-explorer. We may wonder why Spielberg never made a movie about their encountering Pyramids at Cahokia, for certainly they were raiders of the lost mound-building civilizations of North America. The record of their invasion, in which they gathered geological, geographical, botanical, and above all strategic ethnographical information, was immortalized by a friend of Jefferson's, so that it "became an American legend which all Americans should know about, and they should teach their children about it, as well."

Nicholas Biddle transcribed the field notes into our nation's *Aeneid*: A heroic epic of the good soldier fulfilling his nation's destiny by leading wayward countrymen through trials and adventures among barbarians, courageously conquering numerous indigenous tribes, and establishing a brave new Empire upon their broken bones.

Lewis and Clark returned in 1806, disappointed, so legend goes, to inform Jefferson that the Pacific could not be reached overland by ship, yet delighted, to inform the Commander in Chief that the Indians could be pacified.

The expedition has never really come to an end. Despite the natural barrier of the "Stony Mountains," it pushed right over the Pacific rim, into Hawaii, the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and, girdling the globe this month, Haiti.

It was Haiti, after all, that indirectly launched Lewis and Clark's adventure. At the turn of the 19th century Haiti was in revolt against French rule. Napoleon wanted the Louisiana Territory as a source of food, timber and draft animals for sugar plantations in Haiti. Despite dispatching thousands of troops, Napoleon was unable to suppress the Haitian revolt led by Toussaint L'Ouverture.

L'Ouverture established one of the first authentic yeoman republics in the Americas - a

system of production based on small-scale, collectively owned lands run by workers. This model did not require the export or import of raw materials. Foreign markets, foreign technology was not necessary. The Haitians transformed their former prisons, sugar plantations, into sustainable farms. And then they turned their backs on imperial trade, cutting off the flow of sugar to France. Unable to regain control of Haiti, Napoleon sold the Louisiana Territory, land belonging to Native Americans, to the United States in 1803.

Of course, the Haitian Republic was deeply threatening to slave-driving plantation owners in America, like Jefferson. Anglo-American planters were determined to acquire all land beyond the U.S. frontier. This was Indian Territory to which slaves had fled, intermarried with Native Americans like the

Creek, and lived free of servitude to King Cotton. The Louisiana Territory provided land for the westward expansion of monocropping slave plantations, and became battlegrounds between the forces of free labor and slave labor in the years leading up to the Civil War.

The Lewis and Clark expedition helped speed the continental conquest and led to the establishment, under the War Department, of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, our nation's bureaucratic equivalent of The Final Solution.

During this bicentennial celebration of the Voyage of Discovery, we should ask what are we memorializing and how the Osage, the Sioux, the Samoans, the Philippines, the Vietnamese, the Iraqis and the Haitians remember Lewis and Clark. As the Spirit of Adventurous Enterprise or the Spirit of World Conquest? —Derq Quiggle



ALL GROWN UP: GEORGE MICHAEL CHOOSES LIFE OVER CAPITALISM

After a decades-long battle with the music industry and celebrity, George Michael may finally be getting the last laugh. The British pop icon has announced plans to retire from the music industry, and will instead offer all future musical endeavors to the public for free on the Internet. His final album with a record company, *Patience*, will be released in Europe next week, but has yet to find an American distributor.

"I've been very well remunerated for my talents over the years so I really don't need the public's money," said Michael, in an interview with DJ Jo Whiley on BBC Radio 1.

"I'd really like to have something on the internet with charitable donation optional, where

anyone can download my music for free. I'll have my favorite charities up there and people will hopefully contribute to that."

Michael is the first artist of his stature (having sold over 75 million albums) to break with the industry and side with the public on the issue of downloading music from the Internet. The move is unprecedented, and will likely inspire the ire of record company executives world-wide, who along with many artists, are currently launching legal battles to end the practice, which has already resulted in major revenue loss for the industry.

A review of Michael's career shows that he's not only familiar with controversy, but that he's been rebelling against the system for years.

Michael made his debut in the early eighties as one-half of the super-duo Wham!, whose debut album, *Fantastic*, featured a rap (yes, rap) song about being a "dole boy," proud to exchange a job for a good time, with poetic verses like "Hey jerk, you work/this boy's got better things to do/... I ain't never gonna work/Get down in the dirt/I choose to cruise/...I'm a soul boy/I'm a dole boy/Take pleasure in leisure/I believe in joy."

After Wham! broke up in the mid-eighties, Michael's solo career took off with the wildly successful *Faith* album, whose first release "I Want Your Sex" was often censored, and inflamed already popular rumors that Michael was gay. During these years, Michael refused either to confirm or deny the rumors to mainstream media.

For his 1990 follow-up, *Listen Without Prejudice Vol. 1*, Michael refused to give interviews to the press or appear in any videos. The album sold poorly in comparison to *Faith*, but exhibited Michael's growing artistic independence and maturity, with songs protesting war and economic wealth, and criticizing MTV and the music industry.

In the early nineties, Michael accused Sony of treating him like a "pop slave" and fought a long legal battle to loosen their grip. When that battle was over, he was allowed to leave Sony and sign with DreamWorks, but was forced to hand over the rights to previously recorded material, including many songs he had written and composed himself.

When Michael was arrested in 1998 for "lewd conduct" by an undercover cop in a public restroom in Los Angeles, he responded to the overwhelming media ridicule by coming out of the closet and releasing the song "Outside," a snub to his critics. The video featured heterosexual and homosexual couples making love on rooftops and in public restrooms. Michael's message was simple and direct: "I have nothing to apologize for."

And more recently, Michael has wished "to God that the Labour Party had the guts to get rid of Blair," calling the British PM "a dangerous man" who "cannot face up to his own ego."

Michael isn't the only eighties pop superstar who has come into personal conflict with the mass/corporate culture and values he once symbolized. Prince had a similar battle with Sony Music in the nineties, and went so far as to paint the word "slave" on his face for a television appearance. Madonna, one of America's greatest commodities, ex-patriated and now lives somewhat quietly in London.

Michael has also asserted that his self-defined retirement will help provide the privacy he has long sought. "I'm not pretending I won't be famous any more, but in the modern world if you take yourself out of the financial aspect of things, you're not making anybody any money, you're not losing anybody any money. Believe me, I'll be of very little interest to the press in a certain number of years."

— Laila Badu

A REAL QUICK READING LIST

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Histories of Activist Movements

The spectacular and recent rise of a global direct action movement hasn't produced any great narratives, if we leave the Zapatistas' poetic sketches aside. Instead, the three stand-out histories of the post-Seattle movement are anthologies.

The Battle of Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization, soon to be re-released and updated by Soft Skull Press, is the definitive book on both the anti-capitalist manifestation in Seattle in 1999 and the direct action protest movement that exploded in the next couple of years. Focused on Europe and the U.S., *The Battle of Seattle* follows up with reports on Prague, Genoa, Quebec City and the protests at the 2000 Republican National Convention in Philadelphia.

Collectively authored by "Notes From Nowhere," **We Are Everywhere** is a wild ride that rushes around the world highlighting both the radicalism and innovation of the last five years. Just released in paperback is **A Movement of Movements**, edited by Tom Mertes with a focus on the contradictory ideas behind the new movements rather than a blow-by-blow of particular events. The collected essays are something of a companion book to *We Are Everywhere* and include a wider variety of perspectives with a little more analytical heft.

One understandable weakness each of these books share is that the implications of the American government's hard right turn after September 11, 2001 are not dealt with. Even though they were all printed in the 21st century, they read as history.

If Seattle was the birth of the next left, then Act-Up was the midwife. The enormity of the AIDS crisis forced thousands of people into confrontation with the government, medical establishment, and society's long-standing hatred of gay people during a time of general apathy. **From Act-Up to the WTO**, edited by Shepard Hayduk, takes us from Act-Up's militant and clever social messaging in the 1980s and early 1990s to the anti-capitalist radicalism of today. Affinity groups, savvy propaganda and the fight for public space in the face of the commercialization of everything are some of the main themes brought out in riveting detail.

Also of note, **A New World In Our Hearts**, edited by Roy San Filippo, details the rise and fall of Love and Rage, the last national anarchist federation which ironically disintegrated on the eve of Seattle.

For all the claims of novelty, the patterns of activism that dominate today's landscape are largely descended from the innovations and jury-rigs of the 1960s. The primacy of "process," persistent racial fragmentation and small, informal organizing projects with murky long-term objectives have been with us ever since. The roots of the situation are often ignored by those who don't want to carry the baggage of a prior generation. That's a shame, because there was a lot more going on than oedipal rage with a good soundtrack.

Clayborn Carson's **In Struggle** takes the reader beyond the pantheon of official civil rights saints to on-the-ground organizing and the rapid-fire philosophical development of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Learning about profound individuals like Ella Baker and Bob Moses plus the organic radicalism of SNCC's "facilitative leadership" model rooted in

Southern black communities is essential for anyone trying to figure out how transformative movements are built beyond the usual suspects.

Carson's book brings the internal culture of SNCC to life and unlike many histories is neither lament nor hagiography. It lets real heroes be real people.

For those wanting a deeper knowledge of the high-profile militants that managed to build a popular base, **The Black Panthers Reconsidered**, **Detroit I Do Mind Dying**, and the insanelly out-of-print Young Lords history **Palante** are all mind-blowing. Kirkpatrick Sale's encyclopedic **SDS** is way more informative and a better read than Todd Gitlin's morality tale of the 1960s, **Days of Hope, Days of Rage** about the signature organization of the white New Left.

Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967-1975 by Alice Echols tells the story of Radical Feminism, a branch of the Women's Liberation Movement that arguably had the deepest impact on our culture, changing how we view family and bringing the revolution home, for real. Radical Feminism demanded that women be the agents of their own emancipation, a way of thinking that was flowering among all kinds of people who were tired of being "issues" to a movement controlled by middle-class white men who happened to be leftists.

The sixties didn't end in a day, but carried on with diminishing returns through the seventies to finally crash into the Reagan era and the disastrous decision of a half-dozen surviving socialist parties to dissolve behind Jesse Jackson's failed bid for the presidency. Largely unknown, thousands of committed activists recognized the inadequacies of protest politics and earnestly attempted to will a working class communist movement often by leaving college campuses to work in factories and fields as latter-day Narodniks.

With maudlin sobriety, Max Elbaum chronicles the quixotic rise and sectarian decline of what came to be known as the New Communist Movement in **Revolution in the Air**. Elbaum's semi-polemical is a debatable, cautionary tale of how revolutionaries can become the very things they hate. Nevertheless, it manages to inspire a rethinking of how high we can aim.

Related is **Legacy to Liberation**, edited by Fred Ho, a history of the Asian-American movement through roughly the same period. The anthology gives due to a wide range of summations instead of one particular trend's somewhat embarrassed apologia. Similarly, **The Puerto Rican Movement** catalogues the range of diasporic activism from the migration through the collapse of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

Though it's going back a ways, a couple of recent books on the old left have put some breath in the ghost. Radical artists have to read Michael Denning's **The Cultural Front**, a bookish take on the cultural milieu associated with the Popular Front of the 1930s. From organizing projects in Hollywood to the moment of Orson Welles, Denning manages to simultaneously evoke the time and problematize its legacy. Lastly, **Hammer and Hoe** by Robin Kelley tells the story of the Communist Party's work among black sharecroppers in depression-era Alabama. This may seem far from our reality today, but the triple-trick of race, class and the tension between long-term objectives and day-to-day necessities haunts every American movement to this day.

BY JED BRANDT

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

10 am - 6 pm - free
The Urban Visionaries Youth
Film Festival (continues until
Friday, March 26);
Museum of Television and
Radio
<http://UrbanVisionaries.org>

7:30-8:30pm - free
"Life on the Outside," book talk
with authors Elaine Bartlett, for-
mer Rockefeller drug law prison-
er, and activist/journalist
Jennifer Gonnerman;
Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Place
<http://www.lifeontheoutside.com>

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

7 pm - free
"Rehumanize: A Conversation
between Iraq and the U.S." The
event will include a screening of
"Bridge to Baghdad," parts I and
II, produced by Downtown Community
Television and Chat the Planet, which
linked youth in NYC and Baghdad,
before and after the war;
Milbank Chapel, Teachers College,
Columbia University, 525 W. 120th St.
<http://rehumanize.us/events.html>

7 pm - free
Town Hall Forum on the Republican
National Convention w/ Sam
Waterston, Mark Green, Janeane
Garofalo, Arianna Huffington, Bill
Perkins.
CUNY Graduate Center,
365 Fifth Ave. at 34th Street
Info: 646-452-5631

8 pm-\$10-15 sliding scale
BARE SOLES: YaYa, the all-female
Afro-Caribbean music group, and We
Got Issue: The Next Wave of Women
in Power provide hand massages,
an opportunity to speak what's on
your mind, and dancing to a tam-
bour pounding performance by YaYa;
Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance
(BAAD), 841 Barretto St.
Info: 718-842-5223.

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

6:30pm - \$12
Dinner and a Movie:
"The Josephine Baker Story."
The Point, 940 Garrison Ave, Bronx
Info: 718-542-4139.

SATURDAY, MAR. 27

9:30am-4:30pm - free
Meditation Retreat sponsored by
Science of Spirituality; facilitated med-
itation, discussions on spirituality,
vegetarian meals. Flushing, Queens.
Info and registration: 917-376-9008.

8 pm - donation
WORD/LIFE: emcees and poets in
the life. LGBT hip hop and spoken
word with Claudia Alick, Buttaflysoul
and more;
Bluestockings, 172 Allen St.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

1 pm - \$10
Non-Jerry Seinfeld Walking Tour of
the Upper West Side with Radical
Walking Tours guide Bruce Kayton.
Meet at traffic island,
Broadway & 72nd.
<http://www.radicalwalkingtours.org>

6 pm - \$5-\$10 sliding scale
Film: "City of God";
NYC Independent Media Center,
34 East 29th St.
Info: 212-684-8112

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

6:30 pm - Free
Iraqi Labor Under Occupation:
A talk by Issam Shurkri,
a founding member of the Union
of Unemployed in Iraq,
AFSCME Local 1707 in room 1404,
75 Varick St.
mekchi@msn.com

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

8pm - \$12
Nuyorican Rule's Funny Women:
Comedy from Marilyn Torres,
Selenis Leyva, Jeanette Plaza, and
Marilyn Matias. Bronx Academy of
Arts and Dance, 841 Barretto St.
Info/ reservations: 718-842-5223.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

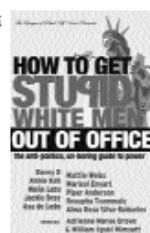
7:30pm-\$6-10 sliding scale
Fascism in India, Genocide in
Gujarat: Dr. Ram Punyani of India's
anti-fascist movement reports on
the current struggles of Gujarat's
persecuted Muslim community.
Brecht Forum, 122 W.27th St.,
<http://www.brechtforum.org>

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